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THE WOOD WITCH:

—OR,—

THE DOUBLE PLOT.

A Story of the Bay Province.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XVI.

MOVEMENTS OF A MAN IN TROUBLE.

On the next morning Mr. Lyon ate his breakfast alone, and then walked out. His movement was towards the tavern where Judge Stoughton was stopping, and he asked to see the justice. Mr. Ruggles conducted him into the apartment where the judge received his guests, and bade him remain there until his master came. Mr. Lyon had to wait half an hour, for Stoughton had not eaten his breakfast when his visitor first came. However, he came at length, and the merchant thought his greeting was rather cool; but that might be only the result of being called upon so early in the morning.

"Have you any business with me this morning?" the judge asked, taking a seat, and putting on his spectacles.

"Yes, sir, I have a little matter upon which I wished to confer with you," returned Lyon, not quite so freely as before. "I allude to the case of Laura Burke. You probably remember, sir?"

"Yes, sir, I remember that you brought complaint against such a person, and that a warrant was placed in your hands for her arrest; also that I called at your house to try the girl for communion with the spirit of evil."

"Ay, sir, and she had then made her escape," returned Lyon; "probably taking her way either directly through the roof of the vault, or through the key-hole."

"Do you think she escaped thus?" the judge asked, gazing sharply into his visitor's face.

"She must have done so, sir."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why—how else should she have gone?"

"You can tell that better than I can. But sincerely, Mr. Lyon, do you think the girl escaped from your wine-vault by superhuman agency?"

"Why—yes, sir. She must have done so, sir."

"Very well," returned the judge, with a slight touch of irony in his tone, "what is now your wish?"

"I wish to have another woman apprehended, for I find that there is a combination of these witches, and that by their infernal incantations and spells they help each other, and while one is at liberty none other can be retained. This woman of whom I now speak has sold her soul to the devil for perpetual youth and beauty. She is now nearly fifty years of age, the mother of a middle-aged man, or, I should say, of a young man—but one well on towards thirty, and yet she is, to all appearances, not over seventeen, and the fairest looking female in town. A person whom I will not now name, but who can be called upon at any moment, and who is one of the most reliable gentlemen of Boston, first made the discovery, and to convince himself he administered to her a dose of poison that would have killed two ordinary men. She took it, but it made no more impression upon her than so much common paste. And furthermore, she has twice been seen in the air, towards nightfall, once flying over the harbor upon a small hickory sapling, and once actually riding a large black cat over the wood towards Haverhill. She is now feigning sickness, for she fears apprehension."

"This is a curious case," said the judge, with some show of curiosity. "And you say you can prove all this."

"Yes, sir."

"And who is this woman?"

"Her name is Matilda Willis, your honor."

A slight show of indignation was manifest upon the judge's face, for he had received a full account of Mr. Lyon's relations with Lucian Willis; and he had also received an account of the strange conduct of Bion Lowton. Lucian had, on his last visit to Thomas, where he had called to see Laura and her mother, related the circumstances of Lowton's attempt to poison them, and the fortunate manner in which Cæsar was enabled to frustrate the diabolical plan. All this Thomas Arthurson had explained to the judge, at the same time stating that farther developments were waited for ere Lowton was arrested. Of course the judge's mind at once rested upon this same Bion Lowton as the man who had so religiously administered the poison, and he thought he would satisfy himself upon this point, so he asked:

"Who was the man who gave this woman the poison?"

"Why, sir, I don't know as there can be any harm in telling you, though I have not authority from the man; but I shall trust to your judgment not to make use of the name to his disadvantage. It was Mr. Bion Lowton, a very wealthy and honored citizen of Boston."

"Ah, yes—I have heard of him. And you would like to have Mrs. Willis arrested?"

"Yes, sir—at once."

"But how about this sickness of which you speak?"

"O, that is only assumed, you may depend upon it."

"I will inquire into it, sir, at my earliest convenience."

"But, honored sir, if you delay it she may be off."

"O, there can be no danger of that, I imagine. However, I will give it my earliest attention."

"Ah—a—I was in hopes, sir—that you might grant me a warrant for her arrest, and let me serve it at once."

"I should prefer that you would return the one already in your hands before you take another."

"But, sir, you know the difficulty I have had. She—this girl—has such superhuman powers, that—that—she baffles me."

"And, sir, according to your own statement, this other woman possesses powers full as wonderful. No, sir—I think I will not issue a warrant now."

"Perhaps to-morrow, then," urged Lyon.

"I cannot tell. What now, Ruggles?"

This last sentence was addressed to the clerk, who had just come in.

"I came to see if you were ready to examine the docket with me," he returned.

"Yes, that must be attended to at once. Mr. Lyon, you must excuse me now."

So the merchant arose and left the room. He made a very low bow as he went out, but his face was shaded by disappointment and fear.

"Ruggles," said the judge, as soon as Lyon had gone, "who was it brought the original complaint against English and his wife?"

"You mean the merchant English?"

"Yes."

"It was the man who has just left you—Mr. Roger Lyon."

"And have not you heard of some remarks touching some hidden reason for this complaint?"

"Yes, sir. It is said that Lyon wronged Mr. English out of some thousands of pounds, and that he offered Mrs. Morton the rent of her house free for two years, if she would teach her children to go into convulsions whenever they saw Mr. English coming near them. You know it was her children who were in court."

"Yes, I know. By my soul, Ruggles, this Lyon is a villain. He is daily and hourly perjuring himself for the purpose of private revenge!"

The clerk was astonished at this remark from the judge; but he said nothing.

Stoughton started to his feet, and having paced up and down the apartment for some moments he stopped and gazed into his companion's face. There was a strange, startling expression upon his furrowed features, and the light of his large, gray eye was more than ordinarily brilliant.

"Mr. Clerk," he said, slowly and solemnly, "in my soul I do believe that men and women may be influenced by the devil to do evil on earth; and I believe that now, as well as in former times, people may possess real devils within them; but I do not believe that this crusade against them should be prolonged farther. Much evil is growing out of it. The evil that these people do is not apparent, while the evil which results from their trial and condemnation is apparent. It is becoming a medium of low, personal revenge. Until within a very few days I looked upon Mr. Lyon and his wife as most exemplary Christians, but now I have found that I was mistaken. And if I was so egregiously mistaken in him, may I not be in others? He has been guilty of the most base and wicked acts, and these people whom he would destroy are those who have become possessed of a knowledge of his wickedness, and whose mere word of exposure might at once ruin him forever. How many others may have been like him. I say, Ruggles, I must ponder upon this matter, and I hope the Lord may lead me aright."

Now Ruggles knew very well that the judge was always ready to acknowledge an error if no one else pointed it out to him; but he was not fond of being informed that he had been in any measure wrong. So the clerk simply gave assent to what he had heard, reserving his opinion until it might be asked for.

In the meantime Mr. Lyon returned to his own house, and the first thing he did on reaching his private apartment was to send for Agnes. She obeyed the summons, though she came in with a trembling step, and a pale cheek. She had experienced little of joy for some time, and she hoped for little while she remained with her parents. It was a harrowing thought, and it was that thought which harrowed her soul. Long and deeply, and with a prayerful heart, had she pondered upon her father's command concerning Lucian, and she had resolved that she could not obey it. Had the command found her unpledged to the youth, she might have even sacrificed the holiest of life's joys to her parent's wishes; but now that the pledge had been given, and that, too, with her parent's consent, she could not violate it.

"Take a seat," said the father, sternly.

The maiden obeyed.

"Now, Agnes, I wish you to answer me plainly, and without falsehood or prevarication. Have you seen Lucian Willis since I told you not so?"

"Yes, sir," the girl answered, faintly.

"Aha—you own it, then. But why did you do so?"

"From the same cause that any one seeks that which he, or she, devotedly loves."

"Then you mean to trample upon my authority?"

"My father, I cannot look upon your command as authority in this matter. Did I believe that my relations with Lucian came within the power of true parental authority, I should obey you."

"By heavens, girl, you are forward with your interpretations. Perhaps you will point out to me wherein this case is exempt from the general rule of parental authority."

"Why, sir, in this case I was allowed to keep company with Lucian, and when he asked me if I could become his wife, I was permitted to say yes."

"But remember, Agnes—it was under protest."

"No, my father, not quite. I had my choice to marry with Lucian, and receive none of your property, or to marry with Walter Dowley, and take twenty thousand pounds. I chose the former. And where now is the man with whom you would have had me wed—where now is Walter Dowley?"

"That has nothing to do with it," returned Mr. Lyon, nervously.

"But it has, my father; for it shows that I was not mistaken in my choice. Dowley is now in prison for forgery."

"Silence!" exclaimed the father, turning pale.

"Is it not as I have spoken, father? and would you have seen me married to a—"

"Silence, I say."

"But I may speak."

"Ay—to the question."

"Then, under your permission I solemnly pledged my heart and hand to Lucian Willis, for life, and I called on God to witness that I would never leave him for weal or woe. Those were vows as solemn as holy writ, and I feel in my soul that I am as firmly bound in soul, and in honor, to my love, as though marriage rites had already been performed. We are not united in flesh, but in spirit and truth we are, and you might as well sever the nuptial tie as to sever us now."

"A very fine construction, truly!" uttered the parent, with all the sarcasm he could command. "But it will not answer here. However, let that pass for the present; and now tell me why you went to see Lucian Willis the last time? Answer me truly!"

Agnes started at this. There was something in her father's look that seemed to say that he knew all. But she controlled herself, and soon replied:

"I called upon him because I loved him."

"You have told me that once before. I wish now to know your particular business with him on that occasion?"

The maiden hesitated here, for she knew not how to reply; but another question from her father relieved her from the difficulty.

"I do not wonder you are stricken with fear," he resumed. "How dared you do such a thing?"

"If you will tell me to what you particularly allude, then I may know better how to answer you," the maiden returned, with a calmness which even surprised herself.

"I allude to the message you carried to the young man—to the betraying of your father—to the wickedness of—"

"Stop, stop, sir," Agnes cried, with a flashing eye and quivering lip. "O, I did not think you would have alluded to this thing, for even the thought of it by me is more than agonizing. Yes, sir—I did carry a message to Lucian. On that evening, when Bion Lowton came here to see you, I had an appointment to meet you here. I came up, and at this door I heard Lowton's voice. I stopped to listen, for I heard Lucian's name drop from his lips. I heard him plan for my lover's death—for his brutal murder—ay, and for the murder of his poor mother, too. You can judge what I heard; and you can also judge how quickly I fled to put him on his guard. But, sir, he gave me his solemn pledge of honor that he would not mention your name, nor tell from whence he gained his information."

For a full minute after the maiden had ceased speaking her father gazed her full in the face. There was some anger in his look, but it was of a puzzled sort; and there was some fear, too. He had expected that his child would deny the charge, and perhaps her frank avowal of what she had done somewhat disconcerted him. At all events, his voice trembled with something else besides passion when he spoke.

"You have placed your father's character in the hands of one who may spread its ruin to the world. Is this the part of a true child?"

Agnes did not answer this question. She thought that one who could form such a character for himself should not blame another for simply saving a dear friend's life, even at the expense of hazarding that character; but she did not speak those thoughts. She made no answer at all, and soon afterwards her father overcame the fear that was upon him, and then his anger had full scope again.

"I may thank you for your honesty in speaking thus plainly," he said, "but you have forfeited all my confidence, and henceforth you shall feel the weight of an authority never yet exercised over you. You shall find that your parents have yet some control over you. Now mark me: Henceforth you leave not this house alone, and never but with my consent. I shall take means to have this put in force. You have had your way long enough. I have tried you under the simple restraint of parental command, and you would obey me not at all. But now we shall see who is master here. Go to your room, and be sure that I shall do as I have said."

Agnes was glad enough to hurry away from her father's presence, but when she reached her own chamber, and came to reflect upon the threat she had heard, she feared that she was to have trouble. She knew that an effort would be made which she could not easily overcome.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE VULTURE POUNCES UPON HIS PREY.

A week had passed away from the time of Thomas Arthurson's last visit to Judge Stoughton, and during that time Mrs. Burke and her daughter had remained very quietly and happily beneath his roof. The young man had passed many happy hours with Laura, and their converse was but one sweet flow of love and gratitude. The more they saw of each other the more were they attached, and each succeeding day served to develop new charms upon which for love to grow. It was Sabbath afternoon. A simple dinner had been disposed of, and then Thomas took down his grandfather's great Bible, and having seated himself at the table, he asked the attention of his companions to the reading of some of the holy lessons therein contained.

He commenced to read Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, and had read four chapters, when he was startled by the sound of footsteps near the cot. He arose and went to the door, and found a female standing there. Her garb was poor, and she leaned heavily upon her staff. Upon her head she wore an old hood which partially covered her face, and her coarse hair also straggled down some over her features.

"Could ye let a poor lone woman in to rest a bit?" she asked, in a low, painful tone.

"Certainly," returned Thomas, at the same time moving back. "Come in and take a seat."

The visitor followed the youth into the cot, and took the seat which was proffered.

"Would you not like something to eat?" asked Thomas.

"No, good sir, I am not hungry. I had a good breakfast this morning, and I am too faint now to eat."

"But you will remove your things?" pursued the host.

"No, no," quickly replied the guest; "there is no need of that, for I cannot remain long."

Now not only Thomas, but also his companions, looked upon this as rather strange. The day was very warm, and even had she not thought of remaining over a few moments, any sensible woman would have removed a close hood like the one which enveloped and lumbered the head of the stranger. They gazed upon her sharply, and Laura seemed to discover something which moved her, for she started as though some unpleasant suspicion had come to her mind.

"Do you belong in Salem?" she asked, of the woman.

"No. I belong away south of here," the visitor replied.

"But I have surely seen you before."

"Have you?"

"Most assuredly I have."

"Where was it?"

"I do not know," said Laura, at the same time gazing intently into the creature's face—or, rather into that very small portion of it which was visible.

"Well—I guess you must be mistaken. I was never nowhere where you could have seen me."

"But by the host, woman, *I* have seen you, too," cried Thomas, leaning forward.

A sort of wicked, evil smile played across the stranger's features as the youth thus spoke, but she made no reply, for just then Thomas started to his feet and looked out at the little front window. He saw three men just emerging from the wood, and coming towards the cot, and he was not long in recognizing one of them as Roger Lyon.

"Woman," he said, turning towards the visitor, "you must leave this place at once. I do not like to turn you out of doors, but there is no help for it now."

"You don't mean that I must go away, sir?"

"Yes—yes. At once," cried the youth, anxiously. "Come, let us have no trouble."

"But I'm not half rested yet, sir."

"O, will you go?"

"You surely will not drive me off?"

"Yes—no. But you must go. Come, you will not put me to the necessity of forcibly ejecting you from the cot?"

"No, for I think you will find that rather a tough job."

In an instant the idea of conspiracy flashed across the youth's mind, for upon no other possible ground could he account for the strange behaviour of the guest.

"Once more," he uttered, "I bid you leave the cot. Leave it at once, or I shall—"

Before Thomas could speak further the seeming woman quickly arose, and throwing off the hood, and shawl, and gown, revealed the somewhat rank proportions of a man.

"Warren Bloom!" gasped Laura, who recognized him in a moment now.

"Ha, villain!" cried Thomas, now recognizing the brutish features; "it is thus you prowl about, doing your villain master's work? Out, I say! out!"

As he thus spoke he threw open the door, and then, ere the rascal could cock the pistol which he had drawn, he seized him by the collar, and with the strength of a young giant hurled him from the cot. He next closed the door and bolted it, but he saw that he was too late. Lyon and his crew were almost upon them, and were running fast. They would be there in a few seconds, and would of course look in at the window the first thing. Ere he could have raised the hearthstone, had he gone about it the instant Bloom was put out, Mr. Roger Lyon's head was popped through the little square window.

"Hallo, there, you young rebel, open your door. I demand it in the name of the king's court. Open, I say!"

Having been advised by the judge to make no opposition to Lyon, Thomas quietly unbarred and opened the door, and on the next instant Mr. Lyon and his satellites, entered. The merchant gazed around until his eye fell upon Laura and her mother, and then, while a look of malignant triumph rested upon his face, he said:

"Aha, I've got you now, have I? Why didn't ye go off through the roof of the building, as before?"

"What do you want here, sir?" Thomas asked, looking the intruder boldly in the face.

"I want Laura Burke, and Susan Burke, the mother of said Laura, *sir*," Lyon returned, in a tone of mock respect. And then turning to the poor girl, he added:

"Come, my fine miss, we'll see if you will make another stampede. You have done it handsomely so far, but I've got you now. I don't think you'll manage to secure another gentleman companion for a night march through the woods. You must have enjoyed it, but I have no doubt you contrived to thank him for his trouble."

The tone of these remarks, more, if possible, than the words, bore a scandalous meaning, and on the instant Thomas Arthurson's broad chest heaved with indignant passion.

"Roger Lyon," he said, in a tone which seemed to come from the very bottom of his soul, "you may have the legal right to take these females to Salem, for so I have been advised; but you have no right to insult them. Remember that, sir."

"Hillo, youngster—you are pert with your instructions. Perhaps you would like to rescue the damsel?"

"I have no authority to rescue her from your legal power, sir; but I have the will to rescue her from your miserable, contemptible insults. If you would reach the town in safety, you will treat with due courtesy the females under your charge."

"Holly toity! What wonderful thing can you do, youngster?"

"What can I do, sir?" cried the youth, with indignant vehemence. "I can protect an honest female from the insults of one who claims to be a man, and who *should* be a gentleman! You understand me, sir; and you can put me to the test as soon as you please."

There was something in the eye of the bold youth that led Mr. Lyon to shrink from any personal rencontre, and as soon as he could swallow his passion he uttered a simple "pooh!" and then turned to the females, and bade them prepare to follow him.

At this juncture Mr. Bloom tried to work his way into the house, but his master ordered him back, probably fearing that he only wished to get some sort of a settlement with the host for his forcible ejectment.

"Weep not, lady," spoke Thomas, as Laura began to cry. "They cannot harm you. You will be protected on your way to the town by the presence of these other men, and when you are once there the power of your enemy over you ceases. He cannot harm you more. You will be as safe there as here."

"Safe from what?" uttered Lyon, choking with passion.

"From all that can harm her, sir," answered Thomas.

"Ay—if she can contrive to split the walls of her prison-house. But gab on—'twill do you good."

The youth took no notice of this dirty fling, but turning once more to Laura he helped her arrange her shawl, at the same time whispering words of comfort into her ear. Finally she was ready, and with one frantic burst of emotion she threw herself upon her mother's bosom, and gave vent to the full fountain of her soul. Mr. Lyon stepped forward and laid his hand upon her arm, but he caught the deep fire of young Arthurson's eye, and he was very gentle in his movements.

"Come," he said; and he spoke kindly for him, for he could not fail of seeing that the sympathies of the officers were awakened in the girl's behalf, and he dared be harsh no more.

"Go," said Thomas. "Go, Laura, and fear not. As sure as there is a God in heaven, so sure may you be of salvation here on earth."

Mr. Lyon now led Laura unresistingly towards the door, and one of the attending officers followed in company with the mother. They left the cot, and had gone but a few paces when Mr. Bloom leaped into the room.

"Aha, me hearty, now I'll pay you off in your own coin!" uttered the pugnacious fellow, at the same time doubling up his fists and placing himself in the most approved attitude.

But Thomas was not in a mood to bandy words with such a specimen. He simply knew that the valorous knight had mistaken his man, and his reply was quick and decisive. With one movement of his body he brought himself alongside the interloper, and on the same instant he dealt him a blow upon the bridge of the nose that sent him flying, heels over head, out through the doorway. It was some moments before Mr. Bloom could pick himself up, and when he did so he seemed to have no desire to seek any further settlement with the young trapper; but, with his face anything but clean-looking, he clapped both hands to his slightly crippled optics, and then followed on after his master.

In the meantime, Thomas stood and watched the departing form of the girl he so fondly loved, and though he felt assured that no harm would come to her through any judicial source, yet he could not feel easy. There was a dark, solemn grief upon his soul, and when at length, the intervening woods hid the departing ones from his sight, he went to his chair and sat down. He bowed his head, and low murmurs of pain fell from his lips. Yet he forgot not to pray.

After awhile the youth started up and gazed about him.

"How lonesome it seems," he uttered to himself, as he looked around upon those seats which had been so lately occupied by those he loved. "The old man whose voice has been the hope-note of my heart has gone; and now she who has become the light of life has departed from me. I cannot remain here. 'Tis too gloomy. I could not sleep—I could not eat here, all alone."

And perhaps another thought came to him, though he did not give it form in words. He knew that Roger Lyon feared him, and what might he not attempt to do, if he thought one who possessed the secret of his villany was alone in the deep dark wood all night? At all events he took down his rifle and pistols, and having seen that they were in order, he raised the stone hearth, and proceeded to place every movable thing of value down in the secret chamber—such as books, papers, bread, the clock, the cutlery, etc. Then he reclosed the place, and having donned his best attire, he placed his pistols within his belt, and then shouldering his rifle he set out, only stopping to lock the door behind him.

Meanwhile Laura Burke and her mother were conducted to the prison-house in Salem. There were already a great number confined there, and it became necessary either to place these two new-comers into a low, damp vault, or else give them an upper apartment generally used as a living-room by one of the officers. The girl pleaded hard that her mother might not be placed where it was cold and dark, and the officer was moved by her prayers to put them both in the comfortable apartment. Before the jailer left them, Laura asked if her mother had been apprehended as a witch; and she was informed that she had.

"And who made the complaint?" the old lady asked.

"Mr. Lyon, ma'am."

"You might have known that, mother," Laura said, as the jailer left. "Of course he now fears you as much as he does me, for he knows that you possess that fatal secret!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

ONE DIE IS CAST.

AGNES LYON had spent two days within her father's house after she had been informed, as we have seen, that she could not leave it again alone. And during that time she had been very unhappy. The chief source of her unhappiness was, that in the path of moral rectitude and honor she found herself obliged to travel in a contrary direction from the commands of her parents. And she had been very anxious upon this point, too. With a prayerful heart had she pondered upon the subject, over and over again, but each time her decision was the same. There was a loud voice in her which could be made to give but one answer, and she finally gave up all thoughts of arguing the question more.

It was on the evening of the second day that she sent for Polly Wilde to come up to her room. Polly, it will be remembered, was a domestic in Mr. Lyon's family, and much attached to Agnes. The woman came up as requested, and her very movements as she entered showed that she had made up her mind to help the young mistress if she was asked, for she came with a noiseless tread, and ever and anon she would cast fitful, furtive glances about her.

"Polly," said the maiden, as the old domestic took a seat, "have you heard about any orders for preventing me from leaving the house alone?"

The woman gave a quick, searching glance towards the door, and then replied:

"There have been such orders given, Agnes, and very strict ones they are, too."

"Do you know what they are, Polly?"

"Yes, 'm, I do; for they was given afore all of us servants."

"And will you not tell me what they were?"

"Why, of course you wouldn't go for to tell master or missus 'at I told ye anything."

"Polly, you know I would not do that. Sooner than betray a friend, I would never my hand from my wrist."

"I know that, Agnes; but I didn't know but that ye might think there'd be no harm in it."

"No, Polly, nothing shall tempt me to reveal the source of my knowledge, even if such revelation were called for; but I do not think I shall ever be asked the question."

"Well, my dear lady, day before yesterday master called us all into the front room, and told us that he had found it necessary to keep you in the house. He said that some evil spirit had already influenced you a good deal, and that you was hurryin' on to destruction as fast as possible. He told us how a bad man was gettin' unholy influence over you, and that you didn't know it; but he was a dazzlin' your eyes and stealin' away your heart. Then he told us that you must not leave the house alone, nor without his permission. The three men are to keep watch o' nights, and we women have to look out daytimes. Michael has to stay up till twelve, just midnight—then Warren Bloom gets up and stays till four o'clock, and then John stays up the rest of the time. And if you go away from the house the one who is on watch when you go is to be turned off without any pay."

"And that is the way the business is left, is it?" said Agnes.

"Yes, 'm."

"And Michael Malone is on the watch from now till midnight?"

"He will be after nine o'clock. I am on the look-out now."

"I will not try to leave while you are on, Polly."

"But do you mean to leave to-night?"

"I don't know about that. I haven't made up my mind yet."

"I'm sure I shouldn't blame you one bit," said the good woman, sympathisingly. "I don't believe in none of this with business, so far as you are concerned, at any rate. Hark! There's master coming out of his room. It wont do for him to find us here together, for he knows that I kind o' like you better than the rest of 'em. You can see me again, you know."

With these words the woman hastily arose and left the room, for she seemed moved by a sudden fear that Mr. Lyon would suspect the truth if he should find her there. But her very effort to escape added chances to this probability, for the merchant met her upon the very threshold, and did not fail to notice her confusion.

"What's this?" he asked, laying his hand upon Polly's shoulder and pushing her back into the room. "What are you doing here?"

"I just came up to see Miss Agnes, sir, a minute," she replied, trembling.

"And what did you wish with Miss Agnes?" Lyon asked, eyeing her sharply.

Agnes saw that the good woman was confused, and she quickly answered in her stead:

"I asked her to come up here, sir."

"Ah, you did, eh?"

"Yes, sir. I wished to know what means had been taken, if any, to confine me to the house."

"And perhaps you found out," the father said, sarcastically.

"I found out only what Polly was willing to tell me, and that is by no means as much as I should like to know."

"But how much did she tell you?"

"She told me that the servants had had orders not to allow me to leave the house without your permission; and she also hoped that I would not bring her into trouble."

"Yes—well—I hope you will not. You can go, Polly."

As soon as the woman had left the room, and closed the door after her, the merchant said:

"Perhaps you mean to obey me now, and if you do, I will remove the restraint I have thus imposed upon you. Come, Agnes, there is no use in you're refusing to comply with my wishes any more."

Agnes saw through this movement at once, but she was not to be caught so."

"You know the determination of my soul, sir; and I shall not—I cannot—depart from it. Give me permission to wed with Lucian, and—"

"Stop, stop," cried the merchant. "By the powers above me, I am not such a changeling. You shall die ere you become the wife of that man! Do you understand?"

"I do understand, sir," the fair girl returned, her finely chiselled lips tightly compressed, and her eyes burning with a calm, stern light. "I do understand," she repeated; "and there can be no more need of remark upon the subject, for I cannot yield. You know my mind, and it cannot be changed while life lasts."

A moment the merchant gazed into the face of his child, and then, while his own face turned pale, and his brow grew dark as night, he said:

"O—if I served you as I ought, you would hold your life but a short time. I would give ten thousand pounds—ay—I'd take them from my store and consign them to the flames at this moment, if thereby I could make you a boy instead of a girl!"

"And why so?" Agnes asked, unable to repress a shudder on account of her father's strange madness of tone and manner.

"Why so? Why, if you were a boy, I could lay my hands upon you with a better grace. And—and—I should do it, too—be assured of that."

"But if I had been a boy, in all probability this state of things would never have existed."

"And why should they exist now, but for your wilful stubbornness? By heaven, girl, I'll stand no more of it. If I've got to break down your proud spirit, I can do it—and, what's more, I will do it!"

Agnes made no reply to this, and after awhile her father exploded again:

"And I can put my hands upon you! I can do it, mind you—and the time may come when I shall do it. I might be sorry for the occasion, but not so sorry as you would be for the result. Mark that, miss!"

"I understand you, sir," the fair girl replied, fearing that continued silence would serve to make her father more angry.

"I am glad you do; and now if you are wise you will do what is best for us both."

Without further remark Mr. Lyon arose and left the room, and as soon as he was gone Agnes threw herself upon the bed, where she gave vent to her feelings in a passionate flood of tears. But by-and-by the paroxysm passed, and she arose and walked slowly up and down the room. Suddenly she stopped and clasped her hands upon her bosom, and bowed her head.

"What can I do?" burst spasmodically from her lips. "Can I remain here and be tampered with thus? Must all my joys of life be thus turned into the gall of bitterness, and all my peace of soul be trampled under foot by one who feels not for me? And that man my—*father!* O, why is it so? Why am I thus doomed to misery in the very place where I should find the holiest of all earth's comforts? But I am doomed—doomed only to pain, while I remain here. Who shall say that any requirement of God binds me here? Who shall dare to claim that I owe filial obedience to one who—who— But the words must not be spoken. Thou, O God, knowest the heart of him who is my father. Forgive me for the act I am about to do; for O, I do it that I may obey thee in my soul!"

The maiden was more calm after this, and having looked at her watch, and seen that it was past nine, she sat down by the window and gazed out upon the heavens. She knew that Mr. Michael Malone was now on the watch, and she determined to go down and see where he was posted. Accordingly, she arose and went out into the passage, and, more from some instinctive impulse than from any present plan, she glided noiselessly along towards the stairs upon the up-toe.

In truth there seemed to be some strange fate which was always ready to lead her where the voice of her father was raised upon matters concerning her interests. Hardly had she reached the head of the stairs ere she heard her father's voice, and the pronunciation thereby of her own name.

"And mind, Michael, you must not even blink," she heard him say, "for Agnes is surely plotting to get away."

"Ah, sir, ye need niver fear ov my slaping at all, at all, sir."

"But you did sleep, Michael, when Laura Burke got away."

"But haven't we decided, sir, that somebody pizened me wid a slaping potion?" retorted Michael, bluntly. "Och, ye'd 'ave never found Mike Malone remiss in his duthy, sir, under any other considerashions."

"Very well, Michael; we'll let that pass; but be sure and not do that again. They wont poison the well, so if you are thirsty you can go there. But these evil spirits are wrestling nightly with my child. The devil has marked her for his victim, and if you would save her from a fate ten thousand times worse than death, be vigilant and watchful."

"But is works mighty curus wid her. She seems to want to run right into his arms."

"That's the way, Michael, these spirits of the Evil One work. They charm their victims, just as the serpent charms his prey."

"Ah—I understand it now."

"Then be watchful."

"But when 'il ye's be able to overcome the spirits?"

"Just as soon as we can get rid of these persons in whom the spirits have taken up their abode. For instance: There's an evil spirit, and a powerful one, in Laura Burke; and it was this spirit that first influenced my child. Then there's another very powerful demon in Mrs. Willis; and it is this last one that is working the most dangerously upon Agnes. They even have the power to drag her away at night, as they did only a few evenings since. A person who knew not the facts might think that 'twas herself that was trying to get away, but it is in reality the devil that speaks and acts within her."

"Faix, sir, an' it's too bad, intherly, an' so 'tis."

"It is, Michael, and in order to be the more guarded you must now pay attention to what I say. I have seen Warren, and explained all to him. Be sure that Agnes does not leave the house. Let not your eyes be deceived, for if you sleep upon your post we shall fear that the witches have possessed you, and you will have to be tried. That would be dangerous, you know."

Agnes could almost hear the poor fellow quake at this announcement, and his reply was quick and energetic.

"Then I shall leave you," concluded Mr. Lyon. "You know that she must come down one of the stair-ways, and from the passage at the other end of the room you can command a view of them both. I shall trust you now."

With this the merchant turned away, and left his man to his duty; and no doubt the poor sentinel fully believed that the evil spirits were seeking to carry his young mistress off. But he was awake for them.

Agnes glided back to her room, and her mind was more than ever strengthened in the resolution she had taken. Surely her father had now severed the last quivering cord that could bind his child's heart to him.

It was now ten o'clock, and Agnes was sure her father had gone to his bed. She went to her window and looked out. The stars were mostly shrouded in clouds, and the earth looked dim and dark. The moon was up—just rising—but a heavy bank of clouds in the east entirely blotted it out, though its influence was slightly manifest. Awhile Agnes gazed out upon the night-scene, and then she turned towards her bed and lay down, having first so lowered her light that its glimmer was hardly perceptible.

At eleven o'clock the maiden arose and gathered up a few precious things she wished to retain, and having placed them in a compact bundle she laid them upon the window-stool. Her next movement was to open the window, and as soon as this was done she knotted her two sheets firmly together, and then secured one end to the centre of a stout broom-handle, which formed a toggle across the window-frame. After this she remained a few moments in deep thought, as though she would call to mind anything she had forgotten, and then she made her way out upon the sill, which was of stone, and quite broad, and in a few moments more she was upon the ground. One moment she bent her ear to listen, and then, with quick, noiseless steps, she glided away into the garden.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

PETRIFIED CITY.

The enterprising traveller, Mr. Ritchie, who proceeded, some years since, with an expedition from Tripoli, for the purpose of exploring the interior of Africa, wrote as follows:—"As one of my friends desired me to give him, in writing, an account of what I knew, touching the petrified city, situated seventeen days' journey from Tripoli, by a caravan, to the southeast, and two days' journey south from Onguela, I told him what I had heard from different persons, and particularly from the mouth of one man of credit, who had been on the spot; that is to say, that it was a spacious city, of a round form, having great and small trees therein, furnished with shops with a large castle magnificently built. That he has seen there several sorts of tree, the most part olive and palms, all of stone, and of a blue, or rather lead color. That he saw also figures of men, in postures of exercising their different employments; some holding in their hands staffs, others bread; every one doing something; even women suckling their children, all of stone. That he went into the castle by three different gates, though there were many more; that there were guards at the gates, with pikes and javelins in their hands. In short that he saw in this wonderful city, many sorts of animals, as camels, horses, asses, and sheep, and various birds, all of stone, and of the color above-mentioned."

CAUSE OF THE COLD.

In a communication to the Scientific American, Mr. T. Barrows, of Dedham, Mass., alluding to the intense cold of this winter, states that he never saw the sky so brilliant and clear by day and night before. He attributes the cause of the cold to the hundreds of thousands tons of powder which have been burned at Sebastopol, and other places, having put into circulation large quantities of nitrous gas. "If saltpetre and sal ammoniac," he says, "be put into a given quantity of water at fifty degrees Fah., it will reduce its temperature fifty degrees." He therefore concludes that the gases of the exploded gunpowder named have exerted a great cooling influence upon the atmosphere, both in Europe and America. On account of the pure cold air this winter, he is of opinion that cholera, yellow fever, and the potato rot will not be so prevalent during the present, as in former years.

A CUSTOM WORTH IMITATING.

It is a custom among certain tribes in Siberia, that, when a woman is married, she must prepare the wedding dinner with her own hands. To this feast all the relatives and friends, both of her own family and that of the groom, are invited. If the viands are well-cooked, her credit as a good housewife is established. But if the dishes are badly prepared, she is disgraced in that capacity forever. The result is, that a Siberian wife is generally a good housekeeper, whatever else she may be, and thus is competent, beyond her sex generally, for the practical duties of life. Girls, bear that in mind!—*Russian Life.*

GOLD WATCH CASES.

The Philadelphia Ledger, in speaking of the manufacture of watch cases, which is carried on extensively in that city, says there are eleven firms engaged in the business, all of whom employ over 300 hands, and turn out at least 500 cases per week, at a cost of some $20,000, or more than $1,000 000 annually. The gold manufactured into cases weekly will not amount to much less than $14,000, or over a half million of dollars annually.

[Written for The Flag of our Union]

THE RIFLE SHOT.

BY FEATHER-PEN.

CONSIDERABLE excitement prevailed among the young men of Greenville, Illinois, for the morrow was to be a gala day. Judge Wilson, one of the most intelligent and upright men in the place, in accordance with the custom, had offered a prize, an elegantly mounted rifle, to be awarded to the best shot.

It was in the early history of the State, and the frontier's man was dependent on his rifle not only for his supply of game, but also for protection from the hostile Indians who prowled about the pioneers of the west.

The young men were busied in cleaning their rifles, and talking in front of the tavern, speculating on the probable winner. The choice lay between two of their number, Joseph Wilson and Hugh Dexter. But one could easily see that they spoke with more favor of the former than of the latter, for Hugh was no favorite with the villagers, and was considered capable of any petty meanness.

The eventful day at length dawned. The sun rose without a cloud, and all things gave promise of a beautiful day. The spot selected was a deep valley, skirted on one side by a little lake. The judges measuring off thirty rods, and placing the target a short distance from an old oak, which stood in the centre of a little green, cleared the ground and put all things in readiness. All the young girls were present, each one hoping that her admirer would win the prize, for there was no slight eclat attached to being the crack shot of the village.

"Joe," said a black-eyed little gipsey, whom everybody knew that he was in love with—and as for that, so were half the young men in Greenville,—"please get me one of those water-lilies." As she spoke, she pointed to a place in the little lake, where they grew very abundantly.

"Certainly," said Joe, his face beaming with good nature, as he laid aside his rifle, and went out on a large bough which overhung the lake, and having obtained the wished-for flowers, he soon returned.

But no sooner had Joe placed his rifle against the tree, than Dexter, who with keen eye had been watching the speakers, stole stealthily up, and *drew the bullet from his rifle.*

On returning, Joe again resumed his rifle, supposing that all was right, as he had loaded it a few minutes before. No one saw the action, for they were all at some distance examining the target. All things being now ready, they commenced firing. Henry Nash was to take the first shot. He was a good-natured fellow, and many hoped that he would win. The young man stepped up smiling, glanced along the tube and fired.

"An inch and a half from the centre," cried the man at the target, as soon as the smoke had cleared away. Henry retired, laughing at his ill success; ill success in comparison with the others, but in reality, a good shot. The others followed in quick succession, some of them even cutting the ball's-eye, until Joe's turn came. A slight cheer was heard from the crowd, for almost every one thought he would hit fairly in the middle. Joe approached with a confident air and fired. But to the surprise of all, the marker declared that the target was not touched. Joe looked at his rifle, but without saying a word, though he stole a glance of disappointment at one pair of black eyes in the crowd, and yielded the place to Hugh who was next. Dexter fired and made the best shot, though he did not cut the centre of the target. Previous to this there had been a slight difference between him and Joe, as to who was the best shot. However, when he was announced as the winner, Joe approached and heartily congratulated him on his triumph. Dexter turned pale and hesitated to take the proffered hand. As soon as it was over he went away, unable to bear the congratulations of his companions. Soon after the crowd separated, slightly disappointed as to the winner.

That afternoon, Joe resolved to try another shot, and shouldering his rifle he went out to the scene of the morning's trial. Having chipped a piece of bark from the old oak, about the size of the smallest ring on the target, and having paced off the distance, he fired and hit it.

"Not such a bad shot, after all," said he, as he walked slowly along, loading his rifle as he went, thinking on his ill luck in the morning. But turning round the base of the hill, after a few steps, he saw two men struggling on the ground, near the border of the forest. A single glance was sufficient to show him that the combatants were Hugh Dexter and an Indian. Just at that moment the Indian gaining the advantage, raised himself partially above his enemy, and Joe saw a knife gleam in his hand, when a bullet from his rifle entered the heart of the savage. Hugh rose to his feet, and confronted his deliverer, while a struggle was going on in his breast, apparently from some cause more potent than this immediate conflict, which, in fact, was no uncommon occurrence. At length he said, after a moment of silence:

"Joe, I drew the bullet from your rifle at the prize trial—can you forgive me?"

Joseph Wilson stood a moment as though transfixed by a sense of the meanness of the action, but at the same time glad that he had not made a bad shot.

"Hugh Dexter, I forgive you," he said, and passed on, while his eloquent features expressed what his lips refused to utter.

Dexter left the village that very day, for he could not face his neighbors after what had happened. A few days after, Joe received the prize rifle, with a card attached, saying, "For him to whom it rightly belongs." Some time after these events, Joseph Wilson married Sue Stanford, the black-eyed little gipsey, and settled down in Greenville, where he now holds the office his father held before him, and is esteemed and beloved by all his fellow citizens.

Anger is one of the sinews of the soul; he that wants it hath a maimed hand.—*Fuller.*

[Written for The Flag of our U

TWILIGHT MUSINGS.

BY GERTY

Slowly the twilight shadows
Gather o'er earth's quiet breast
And the gorgeous hues are fading
Slowly from the glowing west.
In the azure vault of heaven
Myriad stars are gleaming forth
And the night is closing sadder,
Deeper, o'er the snow-robed earth.

But the night is not eternal,
And its hours will pass away,
And again earth's busy millions
Will hail the cheerful day;
But with my spirit dwelleth
Deeper gloom than night can sh
There a darkness reigneth ever,
Sadder than by nature spread.

There were hopes which lit my pa
Bright suns my spirit's view
As the clouds around the sunset,
But like them they faded too.
There were friends who clustered
When my sun was shining brig
Now, alas, I seek them vainly,
In the gloom of sorrow's night.

Though to me no morrow cometh
Save the morning which shall d
When the night of life is over,
And its fears and darkness done
Yet in hope of that bright morning
Homeward still I lift my eyes.
For I know the sun is shining
Evermore beyond the skies.

[Translated from the French for The Flag

THE MAN OF THE WI

BY ANNE T. WILBUR.

"THE mad-woman! the mad-w
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The Flag of our Union.]

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There were hopes which lit my pathway,
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Though to me no morrow cometh.
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Heavenward still I lift my eyes,
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Evermore beyond the skies.

[Translated from the French for The Flag of our Union.]

THE MAN OF THE WILLOWS.

BY ANNE T. WILBUR.

"The mad-woman! the mad-woman!" exclaimed the children of St. Florentin, half laughing, half trembling, at sight of a poor girl wrapped in a blue shawl, her head covered with red rags, marching like the heroine of a tragedy on the road to The Willows.

The children laughed much at her singular dress. But the vagueness of her look, and the sadness of her countenance, extremely pale, caused them an indefinable terror.

The poor girl marched with measured step, seeing and hearing nothing. She passed the mill situated at the foot of the little town. The mill was turning, the miller singing; she heard neither the mill nor the miller. Very soon she passed the numerous poplars along the road, and traversed the meadows, among the elms which were rustling in the breath of evening.

"Poor girl!" murmured an old woodcutter, who was slowly regaining his dwelling; "there she is, taking, as usual, the path to The Willows. May God have pity on her soul! Run in, children!" And one saw only, through the dark and gnarled trees, a silent shadow becoming by degrees effaced, dying in the distance, then disappearing.

In those days, a poor woman lived in a faubourg of St. Florentin. Left a widow with two daughters, she managed to provide for the wants of her little family. The widow Gremi was a washerwoman.

These two daughters were named—the one Mariette, the other Rosette. Mariette was the youngest of the two sisters. She was a simple creature, thinking only of keeping the house in order, and of lightening, as much as possible, the difficult task of her mother. She was one of those who are born and die in the shade, after having fulfilled their duties without ostentation; not thinking they have merited anybody's esteem for having remained prudent and good. But whether she wished it or not, Mariette was beloved, praised, admired by the whole neighborhood. Mariette was a genuine wild-flower. Although she was only eighteen, she did not suspect that there could exist any other sky than that which, overcast or sunny, hung over the cottage of the widow Gremi.

Rosette was not less beloved; nevertheless, the neighbors could not help noticing her want of taste for rustic labors, her aversion for monotonous household cares. Her poor mother had never been able to prevail upon her even to drive the cow to pasture. To put a little wood under the kettle when the humble food of the family was cooking, was for this child quite an effort. Rosette passed long hours in watching the ladies as they promenaded in the avenues of the chateau. It was then that her mob-cap seemed to oppress her forehead like an evil thought. She would begin to weep, and crouch before the fire, dreaming of a thousand foolish things.

One day, Jean Louis, a stout youth of the village, her betrothed, an industrious laborer and a pleasant fellow, by whom more than one maiden in the place would have been proud to have been led to church, said to her:

"We have no ambition, we wish above all to love our wife, and we think a little property on our side, if not a sufficient evidence that we love her, if we offer it heartily, at least proves that we do not mean she shall take up her abode with poverty, pouting and quarrelsome. You see why, Rosette, we are proud of having a little property under the sun."

Rosette blushed.

"It is true," said she, "you remind me, in fact, that I do not possess a single inch of ground."

Jean would have taken her hand; Rosette withdrew it.

"You slight me!" resumed Jean, a little disconcerted, not comprehending how a word from the heart could disturb the susceptibilities of the mind. "We did not think that the sincere word of an honest youth could cause you vexation. You are too proud, Rosette. That does not become us poor folks; it should be left to those who have nothing better to do. And besides, every one knows that your pretty walnut sabots may walk without disgrace in the same path with my iron-heeled shoes."

Rosette made an effort to conceal her pretty walnut sabots.

"Certainly your striped blue woolen petticoat is as good as my coarse gray frock," continued Jean.

Rosette fell back in her chair like lightning, and as if overwhelmed by the striped blue woolen petticoat.

"And if anything should blush, it is our coarse hempen cap, when we meet you at the market with your pretty white cap, so coquettish, so nicely plaited," added he, again.

Rosette felt a thunderbolt fall on her cap, so coquettish, so nicely plaited. She cast down her head.

"We are not as rich as the Marquis of Carabas," continued Jean; "nevertheless, when we commence housekeeping, we will raise our little dwelling one story, add to it a wing, and surround it with a pretty whitewashed fence, with a gate of red bricks. At this very moment, two beautiful hens are setting to prepare for us a nice poultry-yard. Chickens and ducklings await your appearance, to break their shells and flutter before their gentle mistress. Carillon, my beautiful white cow, has a pretty calf. The harvest will fill the barn, and the vintage the wine press. To morrow let us kneel together, to ask the blessing of the curate; you will be, we hope, the happiest of wives, and we the most favored of husbands."

"We have time," replied Rosette, with a pouting air; "what hurries us?"

All Jean's vexation betrayed itself at these words.

"That is a wicked answer, miss; you do not reply thus, doubtless, to the gentleman who passes and re-passes the door of your house every evening," added the poor boy, bitterly.

In fact, a man of singular physiognomy, wearing a grotesque costume, his head covered with a cap surmounted by a floating plume, theatrically enveloped in a long mantle, passed and re-passed the house of Rosette every evening, and went away only when he had perceived the young girl and been seen by her.

Rosette became as red as a cherry.

"Monsieur Jean," cried the young girl, sharply, "it seems to me your tools are rusting in the court."

"So I will rejoin them," replied Jean, with a heavy heart.

As he went out, a merry voice exclaimed: "Rosette! Rosette, come and help me." It was the voice of Mariette returning from the stream with a heavy load of linen on her back. Jean helped Mariette to lay aside her burden.

"Here is a brave girl!" exclaimed he; then he went away.

"Thanks, Monsieur Jean," replied Mariette, "not for the compliment, but for the service."

Jean disappeared without replying. Mariette busied herself in spreading out her linen on the hedge in the garden.

Rosette began to devour the pages of a bad book, lent her recently by a discreditable woman in the neighborhood. All the pride of the world was presented there under the most alluring, the most perfidious colors. The Bible was forsaken in the dust, on the old mantel-piece of the chimney. The bad book never left her. On this day, the extravagances with which she fed her imagination had raised such a degree of excitement, that it was impossible for madness itself to surpass it.

Mariette entered, still damp from the water of the stream. Rosette hastily concealed her book. Her eyes were full of tears.

"What is the matter, my good sister?" said Mariette to her, throwing an armful of vine-branches in the fire, to dry her garments.

"Nothing," replied Rose, who was embarrassed by the question.

"You are weeping then for pleasure, good sister?" said the little washerwoman, smiling playfully; and the little Mariette began to prattle without her sister's listening to her:

"The day has been pleasant; the birds were never gayer, the trees were never greener, the water never softer; our luncheon on the grass, on the banks of the stream, in the shade of the tall lindens, would have given us much pleasure, if the sun had not darted its rays so brightly upon us; never was the beetle lighter in our hands; fatigue was, as it were, asleep in the reeds. So, good sister, your cap is white as the flower of the hawthorn; your apron, red as a poppy; your dress, clear as a field-flower."

Night fell; the precipitate roll of an equipage was heard returning to the chateau; it was a caleche; it stopped. Some ladies descended from it; Rosette saw them and sighed; Mariette uttered a cry and almost fainted; her eyes had met the eyes of The Man of The Willows. The ladies buried themselves beneath the shady avenues of the chatean; the man disappeared. Mother Gremi entered the cottage; Rosette wiped away her tears, Mariette forgot her terror. Rosette began to smile; Mariette thought she had dreamed, so dreamed that she did not perceive that Rosette concealed in her bosom a billet which The Man of The Willows had deposited mysteriously on the little window opening on the garden.

"Let us sup, children," said the widow Gremi; and they supped.

The village was profoundly asleep, when, at the first strokes of midnight, the door of the house of the widow Gremi opened and turned discreetly on its hinges. A person, pale and trembling, issued from it hastily, holding her sabots in her hand, scarcely daring to touch the ground with her foot. The door closed as it had opened. Meanwhile the widow Gremi, who was not asleep, thought she heard an unusual movement in the house. She rose, then lighted the lamp.

Let us follow Rose, for it was she who was directing her steps rapidly towards the valley of The Willows. The mysterious billet had produced its effect. This step of Rose was the reply.

"Thou shalt be queen if thou will, young girl. To-morrow, thy beauty shall eclipse that of the ladies of the chateau. I can lay at thy feet the attire of an empress, all the pleasures of the world, all the power of kings; thou shalt be beloved, admired, obeyed. Come to us, as we come to thee. At midnight; to-morrow will be too late. At the valley of The Willows.

"Signed, THE MAN OF THE WILLOWS."

Rosette had resolution. She quitted without regret the paternal roof, arrived without terror at the spot designated. The infernal billet, in passing over her breast, seemed to have withered her heart. As she arrived, some one said, with a diabolical smile:

"It is here."

She stopped. It was the voice of The Man of The Willows.

"Enter," said he, "through the cavernous trunk of this old tree; it is the baronial door of our castles," added he, with an imperceptible mocking tone.

Rosette entered without replying. He followed her. The old willow trembled from roots to branches, and Rosette found herself transported into an enchanted place, dazzling with lights, azure and gold.

"Here are your apartments, beautiful Rose," said the mysterious man tranquilly, as he led her by the hand.

Then transpired one of those scenes of sorcery worthy of the enchanter Merlin. The pretty walnut sabots, so much admired by poor Jean, were changed into pretty boots of white satin, with red heels, and laced with a silver ribbon. Her petticoat of striped blue wool was transformed into a silk dress of such dazzling whiteness, such a perfect cut, such a rare fit, that it seemed woven, cut, adjusted by the hand of a little fairy. Nothing can express the art which had presided over her coiffure; a gold comb, sparkling with jewels, glistened like a flame in her black, glossy and abundant tresses; a necklace of the brightest coral surrounded her snowy neck, like a circlet of fire; on her fingers, diamonds of inestimable value gleamed like live sparks; bracelets of massive gold, surmounted by the richest topazes, adorned her arms.

A mirror stood opposite Rosette. When she saw herself in it, she thought she should die of joy.

"Rose," then said the mysterious man to her, "you must know that I possess a power unknown to men, which power makes me richer than mines of silver and gold. Science has no secrets for me."

"Yes, sir," replied Rosette, who could not tire of admiring herself.

He conducted her by the hand into vast gardens, full of the rarest flowers, planted with the choicest fruits of earth; thousands of birds of the most varied plumage, from distant climes, were flying about and singing. The light in this garden was strange; it was like a day without sun, like a sun without heat. Rosette nevertheless experienced a secret terror. As she passed beneath a flowery eglantine, The Man of the Willows shook this tree, and roses detached themselves from it in abundance and fastened themselves to the white robe of Rosette. And, again, advancing beneath an immense hedge, The Man of The Willows shook the dew from it; thousands of pearls were scattered among the tresses of the young girl, on her pretty boots, in the roses which set off the brilliancy of her dress; then, a little mist suddenly arose, hovered above Rosette, enveloped her, descended upon her shoulders. The mysterious man stretched out his hand, and this mist became a long mantle of azure; then, raising his eyes to heaven, a thousand stars dropped among the folds of this imperial mantle. They passed into the court; coursers were impatiently pawing the ground, harnessed to an equipage of sombre green; a richly liveried coachman held the reins. At the approach of the mysterious man, two lacqueys came to open the caleche. The Man of The Willows and Rosette hastily entered; the two lacqueys silently took their places behind. The equipage started at a full gallop.

"Where are we going?" said Rosette to The Man of the Willows.

"To Paris!" replied the latter; and the carriage went on, on like lightning.

As Rosette passed by the house of her mother, which she left an hour before, she heard a loud sigh, something like a death-rattle, then sobs. The widow Gremi was expiring; Mariette was weeping. The horses started back; the coachman whipped them; they sprang forward again, fire flashing beneath their feet.

"How beautiful you are thus!" then said to her The Man of The Willows.

Rosette forgot the sighs and sobs of the cottage to smile at this compliment. Nevertheless she could not help saying:

"What are those sighs? Whence come those sobs?"

The man replied:

"It is the wind whistling among the trees by the roadside."

Behold her at Paris, enjoying the world and its pleasures, always under the guidance of the strange man who had carried her off from the poor village. A secret torment began to devour the heart of Rose; ennui seized her. There is a voice which we silence with difficulty, which we can never wholly silence; it is the voice of conscience. It began to trouble the heart of Rosette. A violent desire seized her to throw herself at her mother's feet. Her heart, enervated by pleasures, was incapable of executing such a resolution; she was ignorant of the death of the widow Gremi. The poor woman having risen, as we have said, having lighted her lamp, had perceived the flight of Rosette. The billet, found on the floor, at the threshold of the door, had explained all. She expired just as her daughter was passing by the door; the sobs which Rosette heard were those of her good sister Mariette, who did not know what was to become of her. Jean Louis had hastened to them. The brave youth, on seeing the desolation of the poor cottage, was desolate himself; and, as Mother Gremi looked anxiously at her faithful and gentle Mariette, the honest boy said:

"Mother, fear nothing for her; our head was turned yesterday, but our heart tells us to-day that it is Mariette whom we ought to marry."

The good woman could only press the hand of Mariette and that of the good Jean Louis within her dying hands; the widow Gremi expired like a Christian, without cursing, but asking God to pardon her unhappy daughter.

After the mourning was over, Jean Louis espoused Mariette, who had always cherished a secret affection for him. On her death bed, the widow Gremi had said to Mariette:

"Mariette, take this ring which was given me by your father; it is blessed, my child; seek to find your sister; she is the eldest; give it to her."

The poor woman labored under the idea that her daughter Rosette was the victim of a spell. She had faith that this ring would release her and restore her to repose. Mariette promised to comply with her wishes.

By chance, Mariette discovered the dwelling of Rosette. She set out for Paris; Jean accompanied her. She arrived at the house of Rosette; but each time she presented herself, received only evasive replies:

"Madame is not up;" "madame is at her toilette;" "madame is bathing;" "madame is breakfasting;" "madame is visiting;" "madame has company and cannot receive calls;" "madame is at a party;" "madame is at the opera."

Mariette related all this to Jean Louis, who did not fail to confirm the opinion of the widow Gremi.

"Our poor sister Rosette is certainly the sport of some sorcerer," said he.

It was the season of carnival. One evening, when a crowd of people disguised and masked were surrounding the hotel of Rosette, Mariette resolved, by aid of the confusion, to penetrate there. In order to do this, she put on her prettiest peasant's costume: beaver shoes with silver buckles; a round cap, flowered handkerchief, figured dress; a golden heart and cross on her breast. Mariette entered suddenly. All eyes were turned upon her.

"There is a pretty costume," said the dominos. "The little one is very well disguised. What freshness! what whiteness! a genuine wild flower!"

Mariette did not stop to hear all these compliments; she sought her sister amid the crowd which encumbered the apartments; she found her in the dancing-hall, surrounded like a queen. Her heart beat. She soon entered. This strange man was about to essay the last act of the temptation which was to overcome the soul of Rosette. False priests were awaiting her decision to give her their benediction. On this day, Rosette would certainly have yielded. No one could surpass her in beauty, in decoration, in power. Pride seemed to have vanquished all her repugnance. Mariette appeared. Rosette saw her, and uttered a cry which was heard through the house. The two sisters fell, weeping, into each other's arms.

"And my mother!" exclaimed Rosette; "my mother!" repeated she.

"Dead!" replied Mariette, wishing to give a deep wound to this almost insensible heart.

Rosette cast down her head. Here The Man of The Willows, suspecting some conjuration against his power, made a sign. The orchestra gave forth strange sounds; a diabolical choir howled fearfully. They could hear each other no more. Mariette then drew from her finger her mother's ring, and presented it to her sister. Rosette took it.

"It is our poor mother's ring," said Mariette to her.

Rosette, bursting into tears, raised it to her lips. The infernal orchestra and choir were silent, and behold her pretty satin boots became pretty walnut sabots; her silk dress, a striped blue woolen petticoat; her gold comb, a white and nicely plaited cap; the azure mantle dissolved into mist; the pearls became dew-drops; the roses fell withered at her feet; the lights were extinguished one by one; and the dancers seemed to be shadows passing through each other, effacing and re-appearing like beings of phosphorus. A cry of despair was then heard, and all was extinct. It was The Man of The Willows lamenting the loss of his prey. This fascinating demon, whose name is Pride, was vanquished; the blessed ring had triumphed. Mariette carried her sister back to the village. Jean took her in his willow carriage. From that day, poor Rosette did not cease to go from the cottage to the valley of The Willows, to seek what she had left there—repose. It was in vain; she never found it again. This is the reason why she wandered about silently, why she was indifferent to all around. She was now only a kind of phantom among the living. It seemed as if she sought, despairingly, the innocence of her early days.

One summer night, a shepherd of the place saw Rosette enter mysteriously the village cemetery, then advance, kneel and pray at the foot of a wooden cross planted on a tomb still new. The old shepherd approached; then he heard heart-rending sighs, bitter words. Rosette wept, her long and black hair was disheveled and hung down over her shoulders; her aspect was so mournful, that the old shepherd dared not disturb the prayer of the poor girl. By degrees the voice of Rosette became extinct; the unhappy child sank down and lay extended on the funereal turf. Very soon the shepherd heard and saw no more; but raising his eyes, watching a moonbeam obstructed by the clouds, he saw something like two arms closely embracing—a poor woman, a kind mother, who, all in tears, was bearing away in her arms a sad and pale child, invoking God and looking upward to the sky. It was the soul of the widow Gremi; it was the soul of the unfortunate Rosette.

And as the young men and young girls interrogated the good curate concerning the story of the old shepherd, saying to him: "Was, then, that wrought this miraculous reconciliation?" the good pastor replied to them:

"It is, my children, *filial repentance and maternal love!*"

PHILOSOPHY.

What oddities men are, to worry because they are not so well off as "that fellow across the street!" The richest man in town will be as forgotten in fifty years as the mason who built the Pyramids. In 1848, we attended the funeral of a millionaire. We visited his grave recently, and saw four bob tailed pigs rooting the soil from his grave. And this was the end of influence—a neglected grave, with four stub-tailed pigs rooting up the soil. "So passes the glory of the world!"—*Life Illustrated.*

NEW WAY TO DETECT A THIEF.

The father of Mr. Webster, the great American statesman, was a very humorous and jocose personage. As he was once journeying in Massachusetts, not far from his native town, he stopped rather late one night at an inn in the village of ——. In the bar room were about twenty persons, who called out for him to discover a thief. One of the company, it appeared, had a watch taken from his pocket a few minutes before, and he knew the offender must be in the room with them.

"Come, Mr. Almanac maker! you know the signs of the times, the hidden things of the seasons—tell who is the thief!"

"Fasten all the doors of the room and let no one leave it; and here, landlord, go and bring your wife's great brass kettle—"

"Whew! want to know! my stars! my wife's —whew—ew!" quoth Boniface.

"Why, you wouldn't be more struck up if I told you to go to pot!"

Boniface did as commanded. The great brass kettle was placed in the middle of the floor, its bottom up—as black, sooty and smoky as a chimney back.

"You don't want no hot water nor nothing to take off the bristles of no critter, do you, squire?" said the landlord, the preparations looking too much like hog killing; "the old woman's gone to bed, and the well's dry!"

"Now go into your barn and bring me the biggest cock-erel you've got."

"Whew! You wont bile him, will you? he's a tough one. I can swear he didn't steal the watch. The old rooster knows when it's time to crow, without looking at the watch!"

"Go along, or I wont detect the thief."

Boniface went to the barn, and soon returned with a tremendous great rooster, cackling all the way like mad.

The old rooster was thrown under the inverted kettle, and the lamp blown out.

"Now, gentlemen, I don't suppose the thief is in here, but if he is, the old rooster will crow when the offender touches the bottom of the kettle with his hands. Walk around in a circle, and the cock will make known the watch-stealer. The innocent need not be afraid, you know!"

The company, then, to humor him, and carry out the joke, walked round the kettle in the dark for three or four minutes.

"All done, gentlemen?"

"All done!" was the cry; "where's your crowing? we heard no cock a doodle-doo!"

"Bring us a light."

A light was brought, as ordered.

"Now hold up your hands, good folks!"

One held up his hand after another. They were of course black, from coming in contact with the soot of the kettle.

"All up?"

"All up!" was the response.

"All black!"

"A—ll—don't know; here's one fellow who hasn't held up his hand!"

"Ah, ha, my old boy! let's take a peep at your paws!"

They were examined, and were not black, like those of the rest of the company.

"You'll find your watch about him—search."

And so it proved. This fellow, not being aware, any more than the rest, of the trap that was set for the discovery of the thief, had kept aloof from the kettle, lest when he touched it, the crowing of the rooster should proclaim him as the thief. As the hands of all the others were blackened, the whiteness of his own showed, of course, that he dared not touch the old brass kettle, and that he was the offender. He jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire, and was soon lodged in as uncomfortable a place, as either, to wit, the jail.—*National Eagle.*

HANNIBAL AS A GENERAL.

Hannibal in his 26th year was nearly of the same age as which Napoleon Bonaparte led the army of the French Republic into Italy. Bred in the camp, he possessed every quality necessary to gain the confidence of his men. His personal strength and activity were such that he could handle their arms, and perform their exercises on foot or horseback more skilfully than themselves. His endurance of heat and cold, of fatigue and hunger, excelled that of the hardiest soldier in the camp. He never required others to do what he could not and would not do himself. To these bodily powers he added an address as winning as that of Hasdrubal, his brother-in-law, and had talents for command fully as great as those of his father, Hamilcar. His frank manners and genial temper endeared him to the soldiery; his strong will swayed them like one man. The different nations who made up his motley army—Africans and Spaniards, Gauls and Italians—looked upon him each as their own chief. Polybius twice remarks that, amid the hardships that his mixed army underwent for sixteen years in a foreign land, there never was a mutiny in his camp. This admirable versatility of the man was seconded by all the qualities required to make the general. His quick perception and great sagacity led him to marvellously correct judgments of future events and distant countries—which, in those days, when travellers were few and countries unknown, must have been a task of extraordinary difficulty. He formed his plans after patient inquiry, and kept them profoundly secret till it was necessary to make them known. But with this caution in designing was united marvellous promptness in execution. "He was never deceived himself," says Polybius, "but never failed to take advantage of the errors of his opponents." Nor was he a mere soldier. In leisure hours he delighted to converse with learned Greeks on topics of intellectual interest.—*The Court and Camp.*

PLAYING WILLIAM TELL.

In Pittstown, Rensselaer County, N. Y., Horace H. Wadsworth, with his rifle at arm's length at twenty paces, shot a potato from the head of a young man named Crogan. The potato was cut in two, and by the force of the ball a wale as big as a man's finger was raised on Crogan's head, and the poor fellow thought his skull was split, though no blood was drawn nor any real harm done. The truth is, a party in the tavern, somewhat elevated, had been discussing the story of William Tell, and that led to the perilous trial. Crogan says it was the first and last time that he will ever stand as a live illustration of Swiss patriotism.—*Boston Transcript.*

SCANDAL.—A conscienceless one gives the following:

"Those girls are all a floating show,
For man's delusion given;
Their smiles of joy, their tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow.
There's not one true in seven!"

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

HOME BY THE SEA.

BY MRS. M. W. CURTIS.

Where the sunlight danceth o'er the crested wave,
And the murmuring of the billows lave,
Where are rocks half-hidden 'neath a sea of foam,
And the wild bird flieth—there I'd have my home.

There, when twilight shadeth in a summer eve,
Oft I love to wander, and bright fancies weave,
Listening to the chiming of the sea and shore—
There I love to linger when the day is o'er.

When the moonlight reateth with its silver light
On the ocean's bosom, in a summer's night,
Then the sparkling moon-rays, lovely to behold,
Cast a spell around me with entrancing fold.

When the sunbeams sparkle o'er the glassy deep,
And the wintry storm winds 'neath the waves sleep,
Azure skies above us, whence the zephyrs come,
On the shore I linger— there I'd have my home.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A NIGHT AMONG WOLVES.

BY H. S. MIDGLEY.

Poor Jean Bragg was a Texan ranger known to almost every fighting Mexican or Indian over the whole borders of Texas. But at last he is missing, and none know where his bones lie, or of his fate, save that he must have met it on the prairies or in the forest he once loved so well.

Speaking of wolves reminds me of one of Jean's bold and perilous adventures, which even he could scarcely refrain from shuddering at, as, seated round the camp fires, he whiled away the time by repeating it. He had just eluded the vigilance of a band of hostile savages, when he came upon the track of one of those terrible prairie fires, which devastate the country for hundreds of miles at a time. Before him, as far as the eye could reach, there was only one charred, levelled, smouldering waste, that had to be crossed before he could reach water for which both himself and his wearied horse were now almost perishing. To return in his track, were death, for the yelling redskins were scarcely out of sight; and feeling sure, from the actions of his companion, that escape was impossible in that direction, as the animal was already run down, he determined that the safest course for him would be to cross the still smouldering track of the destroying element, whose glare and smoke could be seen towards the west. But water, water he *must* have, or they would both die. He urged on his wretched steed with the last energies of his sinking life.

In an hour he had begun to grow dizzy, and the blackened earth swam round and round, and tossed him to and fro! Now strange noises were around him, and in the wavy moments of consciousness, he could catch glimpses of huge wolves careering about him, who would turn up their fiery eyes to his, and howl at him with red-hot, open mouths, and boiling tongues.

Suddenly his horse rushes down a steep bank, and there was a great splashing. Water! O, how thankful! was! He tumbled from his saddle into the cold, delicious fluid, and the bath at once restored his consciousness, and he saw himself surrounded by thirty or forty prairie wolves, some of whom were swimming in the water after him, while the others sat upon the bank of the small lake he now discovered it to be, and howled fiercely at him.

He struck those which were the nearest with his gun-barrel and beat them off, while he had time to draw his hunting knife. One of them had seized his passive horse (who stood and drank) and endeavored to pull him down; his head was split by the heavy knife. But those on the bank only howled the louder, and they were answered by hundreds of others, who were swiftly gathering at the well known call to banquet; for these wearied and infernal brutes always collect to follow the course of a prairie fire, and tear the carcasses of those animals that are killed, or to chase and drag down those that, scorched, blind and staggering, are yet alive. The creatures at other times are utterly contemptible for their cowardice, but Jean shuddered when he called to mind their deadly fierceness at such times as these.

The horse, also, now refreshed, gazed round with staring eye balls upon the crowds that lined the shores. He snorted in affright, and lifted his head with a mournful neigh that seemed the most piteous sound poor Jean had ever heard. He mounted, and after firing his rifle with deliberate aim into the thickest of them, charged through at full speed. They leaped at his feet and attempted to seize his horse's legs; but through them he trampled, and across the prairie flies snorting with terror, and moving with as great speed as if fresh and strong. And away, too, in pursuit, swept the crowd of wolves, now numbering over a hundred; and as Jean glanced his eyes around, they seemed close to his heels. The greater part, particularly those that seemed the most fierce and ravenous, were scorched nearly naked. With the white foam flying from their long red tongues, and their fiery, glaring eyes, they presented the most unearthly terror that ever mortal lived to be chased by.

The appalling conviction that if his horse should fail or give out, they would both be torn in fragments in an instant, caused him to give all his attention to guiding his steed, for the only hope now lay in him. He soon found that he was gaining, for there is little comparison between the speed of a horse and that of a prairie-wolf, and hope began to rise in his bosom as he sees timber ahead, and he shouted in an ecstacy of joy, for he, at least, can be safe. His horse sees and is inspired too, but they have scarcely reached the timber, when the poor animal gives out, and after a few ineffectual efforts, can only lean against the trunk of a tree and groan with exhaustion. He is tied to one of the lower limbs, while his master ascends the tree and loads his arms in the vain hope of defending him. He ascends higher to look out for the approachers, in the vain hope that they have given up the chase; but there they come, and several large white wolves have joined them now, and his heart sinks as he knows the tameless ferocity of those red-eyed monsters, and feels that his true, his noble horse must die. The poor steed shivers, as he hears their cry, and utters that wailing neigh, as they rush upon him in a body. In a twinkling he's down and torn to atoms. Jean fires upon them; of what avail is it? and the empty halter hangs useless beside the tree.

Now they lie panting around, with their fiery eyes turned up wistfully at him. Whenever he makes a movement, they rise, and leap with eager yells towards him, as if to meet his face. In this dreadfully hopeless position, a grotesque sort of humor suddenly possessed him, and he commenced deliberately firing at the glaring eyeballs of the white wolves, and fairly danced with glee when he saw them tumble over with the shrill death-cry, then the whole pack rush on and tear them into shreds in an instant. In this way, every white wolf that had joined the chase was slain. This sport delighted him so much, that he became careless and commenced falling, and only saved himself by dropping his gun, which they seized and almost tore its stock to pieces before they discovered it was not eatable.

Darkness was coming on, and they seemed not in the least disposed to go; and he felt that he must tumble from the faintness of hunger and fatigue, if he was compelled to stay another hour in that tree without food.

It is a peculiarity worthy of remark that these pieces of timber, or islands, as they appear on the smooth face of the undulating prairies, are nearly always of one sort of tree, and it is very rare to meet with one where there are two sorts. Like the beasts of the forest that herd together according to their kind, so does this wild vegetation preserve itself distinct in its several species. One island will be composed of live oaks, another of plum, and a third of pecan trees; the vine only is common to them all, and embraces them all alike with its tenacious but slender branches. They are generally perfectly free from bushes and carpeted with the most beautiful verdure. In this instance, the huge volumes of smoke and flame that had passed so near and only suffered the island to escape from the dampness and luxuriance of the foliage, and from its being situated on the summit of a high knoll, had withered the leaves and crested all with the same sable pall of the smoking prairies around.

In the moments of almost despair, prompted by the pangs of hunger, he began chewing the bitter and smoky bark of the tree on which he had taken refuge, when suddenly he observed that those surrounding him were loaded with plums now just ripe, and the thought that if he could only pass to the next tree, he might be safe, flashed through his mind.

The distance was scarcely ten feet, and yet to reach it, he must dare the ferocity of the yelling pack below, who, with fiery eyes and ivory teeth laid bare, waited anxiously to tear him in pieces. But Jean was one to whom all expedients were common. He saw to descend were death, and his only safety was in bridging the intervening space; and he immediately commenced cutting off with his stout hunting-knife the top of the tree above him, after first carefully trimming it of all branches.

If he can only succeed in guiding the fall of the pole thus produced, so that one end may lodge firmly on the nearest tree, and thus form a bridge on which to cross, he may yet be saved; and the hope of life grows strong within him. Cut through at length, he sees it tremble—he exerts his feeble strength—it cracks—it slowly moves! O, if it fails, there's no more hope for Jean! It falls, goes crashing through the withered leaves and smoky branches, and catches—moves again—but finally becomes firmly fixed in the opposite tree, while the end just severed (and which he had taken the precaution to firmly fasten with his hunting-belt) is safely secured, and a bridge is formed, on which to cross would require a strong man's arms; but still the weak, tired and suffering hunter must dare or die. He seizes the frail support with both his hands and commences passing himself across, while his dangling feet, scarcely a man's height from the ground, seem the mark for an hundred fiends to precipitate themselves against. But their haste is his safety; and in their eagerness and thirst for blood, they hinder each other, and battling, they roll and rage in madness at the failure of their efforts.

At this moment, as if to seal his fate, the treacherous branch to which he clung with convulsive grasp, began to crack and bend. At such a time, fear in a brave strong man might be excused, and hope grow dim. But for poor Jean there seemed no hope. Even his broad Panama, as if forsaking its master, and influenced by the evening breeze, fell off and was borne away. As his eye glanced after it, his brain grew dizzy, and murmuring a prayer for mercy from Heaven, the faithless tree-top broke and he fell to the ground.

Man's life hangs on a single hair, and oft the destiny of nations turns upon the smallest point, and it was thus with Jean Bragg; and to the simplest accident he owed his life. When his hat blew off, the crowd of wolves pursued, and he had gained the foot of the long-coveted tree before they, apprized by the loud crash of his fall, came rushing on. And need was there of haste, for scarcely had he gained the lowest branches before the merciless leaders of the hideous throng dashed at him, but missing their way so narrowly, that they carried away in their ugly and frightful jaws part of the hunter's clothes. But trembling and breathless, he felt that at least he was safe, and hastened at once to assuage those keen demands of appetite that had so nearly cost him his life; and the small sour fruit, smoked and sodden, seemed to his parched and fevered taste the most delicate of dainties.

Somewhat refreshed and at length satiated, Jean observed for the first time that the sun was just sinking behind clouds of smoke that hovered over the flames now hidden by distance, like the vulture over the track of war and desolation, and the question at once arose in his mind, how was he to pass the night? He knew that if he slept, it was but to fall into the ravenous jaws of demons whose eyeballs he could see glaring around him like globules of fire, shining through the rapidly increasing darkness, and who, with parched lips and snapping teeth, kept watch around. Securely buckling himself to the tree with his belt, he resolved to keep watch, if possible, through the live-long hours of darkness in silence, in hope that, wearied out and despairing of obtaining the morsel so longed for, they would leave him. This very silence induced sleep, and after vainly resisting the overpowering inclination, his eyes imperceptibly closed and he slept.

How long he remained unconscious, he knew not; but visions wild and fanciful chased in dreadful dreams repose away. The scenes of the day came before him, and the horrid acts seemed acted over again. It seemed to his disordered fancy that a colossal phantom blacker than the darkest night encircled him with its huge sable arm; and the poor hunter shrieked piercingly in the midst of his slumber, for it seemed as if the cold and slimy contact of a tremendous snake were coming upon him, and he writhed and struggled with horrible convulsions in the imaginary grasp of the sable being. And then it appeared as if he were suddenly carried away with appalling rapidity through an atmosphere as black as pitch, and dense as if it were one vast mass of soot. His tongue seemed paralyzed, so that he could not give vent to the scream which he wished to send forth as an expression of his agony, when he became aware that the shape of the colossal being was growing every instant more and more terrible. The legs and feet became elongated in the form of a tremendous serpent—the vast mass of moving, loathsome, undulating blackness stretching away to an incalculable distance, till at length it became lost in the soot like gloom; while its head seemed turned to a multitude of wolves' heads, with gaping mouths and long red tongues, nodding and winking with those fiery eyes, that seemed to burn into his very soul and scorch his very blood with terror.

But suddenly the demon stops, and his sable arms placed the dreamer upon the summit of a pillar shooting up from some unfathomable abyss, and shrieking aloud in tones so like the last loud plaintive neigh of his faithful steed, mixed with the yells of grinning fiends innumerable, that the sounds rang in the hunter's ears for years. The demon relinquished his hold upon his trembling prey, who instantly fell, screaming and shrieking horribly, through the air.

But just as it appeared to the wretched Jean that he was about to be plunged headlong into the bottomless pit, he awoke with so convulsive a start, that the vast tree-trunk shook and quivered as he clung to it in an agony of terror. Then he hung motionless—utterly motionless—for a few moments, striving to collect his scattered thoughts and deduce the conviction that it was all a dream.

But such a dream—the deathbed knows no anguish, and the churchyard has seen no mental misery, more poignant than he had passed through in this phantasy. Still upon his haggard brow stood the big drops of terror, and still was the sense of an awful consternation upon his brain and heart.

At length, when assured that there was nothing of reality in all that he had gone through, he raised himself only to see the glaring, horrid eyes of the wolves fixed upon him. And there he clung, silent and sleepless, until the rising sun cast its bright, glorious, warming rays over the desolate and charred prairies. They glanced on him, warming his stiffened limbs and kindling within his despairing heart fresh hopes of life, and longings to escape the fate which half an hour before he had almost wished to dare, as a panacea for all his pains. He watched it as it climbed slowly up the vast blue arch until overhead it marked with shortening shadows the hour of noon, and hope again began to wane, as slowly it passed on its way to the golden gates of the west; and the conviction forced itself upon his mind that at last he must perish before that another sun arose. He had become entirely reckless now, and loaded his pistols, determined, if he must fall, to bring death with him for some more of his ferocious persecutors.

Suddenly he heard a distant yelling on the prairie like that which had sounded so dreadfully behind his flight. The wolves sprang to their feet and with pricked ears, listened. He looked towards the prairie, and could faintly discover a large buffalo bull plunging along over the plain, surrounded by a great herd of wolves, who were tearing him at every jump. He could even hear the low bellowing of the creature's agony—another victim!—and his thirsty guardians started to join the chase. One after one they went, while those who staid behind would turn their heads to look wistfully back at him and whine and lick their dry chops.

When the chase came in sight, off they started in a body with savage yells. He knew he should be safe now if he could get a fire kindled before they returned, if they did so at all. Before they were out of sight, he had reached the ground, and with trembling eagerness proceeded to light a fire with the help of the tinder-box which every ranger carries. He soon had a great blazing fire, and then curtailing a piece from the last wolf killed—for when they started off, he had fired his pistols after them, killing one and breaking the shoulder of another, who kept on yelling with the pack—he proceeded to roast it for food. Having eaten, he felt so much refreshed that he could now proceed to make provision for the night's rest. He gathered a great heap of wood and built a large blazing circle about the spot selected to sleep upon. The wolves came back in about an hour after he had made his arrangements for the night; but he now felt perfectly secure, for though he could see their hungry eyes shining all around, and they kept up a continual howling all night long, he laid himself down and slept soundly until morning, and when he awoke, the wolves were all gone but one or two cranching at the bones of yesterday's feast. He shot one of them and made a breakfast off of it. On picking up his gun, he found that although much torn and gnawed, it could still be used. He now took his course and started towards the settlements, which after a long tramp he reached safely.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES TO AN ABSENT FRIEND.

BY MARY BELL.

'Tis cold without, the snow is drifted round,
The icicles are thick on every tree,
And in my heart a kindred gloom abounds,
For where thou art not winter reigns for me.

How strong the love that binds the heart to heart,
Not like ' the fading fancy of the hour,"
It holds us bondmen under sorrow's smart,
In joy or woe obedient to its power.

How prized the memory of kindly deeds,
And friendship's tokens, are they not most dear?
And, when afar, the lonely heart still feeds
On thoughts of what was when our friends were near.

Ah! 'tis a troubled sleep the exile knows,
Broken by dreams, and fancies born of love,
Rough is the mountain, deep the stream that flows,
Where'er in sleep we chase our heart's lost dove.

We never hear a kind and tender word,
But it will call to mind a friend most dear;
And the sweet echo to a voice once heard,
In every gentle tone we seem to hear.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE ART OF SLEEPING.

BY THE OLD 'UN.

Poor Sancho Panza has been immeasurably laughed at for his exclamation, "Blessings on the man who first invented sleep!" but we fancy that we shall be able to prove that his expression was perfectly correct, and that the pursuit of sleep under difficulties is an art and science, requiring talent and cultivation for success. But this we cannot well do without resorting to our old trick of story-telling.

Some dozen years since, while sojourning at Williamsburg, we went one glorious summer evening to Niblo's Garden to witness a French vaudeville company from New Orleans. The weather was as fine as a night at Naples; the moon rose without a cloud; the air was tropical, and suggestive of the necessity of white pantaloons and vest. The play was a very attractive one, and the performances long—extending, in fact, into the morning. When the "school was dismissed," the weather had become threatening; but not, as we thought, immediately betokening a storm; so we set out to foot it down Grand Street to the ferry. About half way down, a sudden thunder storm, accompanied by a perfect deluge of rain, broke over the devoted streets. An awning and a doorway afforded us temporary shelter till there was a lull in the peltings of the pitiless storm.

Between drops, as it were, we finally made our way to the ferry-house, where no lantern was displayed, and where two ruffianly proprietors of a leaky boat assured us that their craft—they, themselves, looked in the dim light very much like river-pirates—was the only conveyance for crossing the stream, and offered to ferry us over for the modest sum of ten dollars. Liking neither the men nor their terms, we concluded to take lodgings at some hotel in the city; but in all Grand Street, and in all Broadway, there was none open. The "All Nations," which we occasionally patronized, because it commanded a pleasant view of Trinity churchyard, was hermetically sealed, and though we used up our walking stick, and a cane we borrowed of a benevolent watchman, in seeking to make an impression on the auditorium of the porter, we were compelled to relinquish the attempt. Wet, tired, sleepy, the pleasant prospect before us was that of walking the streets till morning. Diving down a by-street, a light in a window attracted us, and we entered a low-browed room, with a sanded floor, and benches ranged around it; a sort of parcel eating-house, parcel bar room and parcel variety store. We were compelled to seek its shelter, uninviting as it was, by the rain, which descended in furious torrents just as we reached the door. The proprietor of the establishment, a venerable individual in a green baize jacket, sold at his counter liquors of all kinds, and cigars of every villanous flavor, Coney Island clams, Blue Point oysters, cakes, marbles, candy, knitting needles, ice cream, fine-tooth combs, castor oil, soap, sassafras, India rubber, musk-melons, dried codfish and snuff. Selecting from this assortment half a dozen of the least ambiguous cakes, to authorize us to a seat for a few moments, we looked around us.

A seedier set of individuals than those who rested on the surrounding benches our eyes never beheld. They seemed to be clad in the refuse of a Rag Fair; a Parisian *chiffonier* would have disdained to wear any of their garments. With arms folded, legs crossed, and hats and caps pulled down over their brows, they were all in attitudes of profound repose, with the exception of one foot, which in each of those singular figures kept in perpetual motion, up and down, sideways or semicircularly. A sandy-haired waiter, evidently a London cockney, kept perambulating the room like a sentinel, holding a little rattan in his hand. We watched his motions narrowly, and observed that when one of the loafers ceased to agitate his foot, he received a sharp cut from the rattan across the toe, with the admonition of "Vake up, Mr. Ferguson—you can't sleep 'ere!" One of the wretched men, whose foot did not exhibit the required vitality, even after receiving the admonitory cut, was seized by the collar by the waiter, dragged from his seat, and unceremoniously ejected into the street. This awful example, which created an unwonted disturbance, roused every individual in the room to unusual activity. Each one seemed anxious to prove his wakefulness by coughing, whistling, or scuffling on the floor. The waiter, after grimly surveying the same with a smile of satanic satisfaction, condescended to sit down by us and address us a few words.

"A rum set of customers, mister!" was his opening remark.

"You mean they come here for rum."

"They buys just one glass apiece," said he; "cost's 'em three-pence, and that gives them the freedom of the room—just as your cakes does yours."

"Ah!"

"But, 'cordin' to the reg'lations of the guv'n'r yonder, we don't allow no sleepin' on the premises. The werry moment we detex ven hasleep, hout 'e goes—just as hi served that 'ere chap just now. They haint got no other place to sleep in, 'cept the streets, and there the police stirs 'em up continually; so you see they larns 'ow to behave themselves."

"Well, they're all wide awake now," said we.

"Never you think it, mister," said the waiter. "Ah! they're the downiest, owdaciousest set of scamps you ever see. They've larned to wiggle their feet while they're fast as a top. Long as they keep a teetering their toes, they're safe. Hullo there, old Blue Cap! vake up, or I'll be arter you vith the sharpest kind of a stick."

The admonished individual stirred uneasily, and began to whistle "Dandy Jim."

"That 'ere covey's the downiest of all," said the waiter, half admiringly. "I'm blessed if he haint larned to whistle 'Ginger Blue' 'ven he's as fast as the Seven Sleepers. But we've put a stop to 'Ginger Blue,' and now he's larnin' another tune. Ve 'as to vatch 'im werry narrowly, and ve allers detex 'im by a kinder 'uskiness in the demi semiquavers. I gets 'alf a dollar a week hextra on account of my musical hear. Hullo! there's a false note! Confound the feller! 'E's hasleep agin. Vake up, Mr. Ferguson!"

Having seen a new chapter of human nature, and the weather having cleared up, we bade adieu to the establishment, and sallied forth once more in pursuit of a lodging. Fortunately, the City Hotel was open.

"Got a spare bed?"

"Yes'ir—coords on 'em."

The way we sunk into that bed—the way we slept—the way we didn't hear the breakfast-gong, and the roar of the imperial city waking up at daybreak—is nobody's business but ours. We never slept sounder, and never, on awaking, and on recalling the scene of the past night, had a more vivid impression of the profundity of Sancho Panza's philosophy.

News Glances.

Cost of the War in England.—The London Times says the Russian war has already increased the national debt of Great Britain one hundred and fifteen millions of dollars, notwithstanding the taxes of the nation have been much increased for the last two years; the property tax having reached a larger sum than was ever before raised by a direct impost from any people since the beginning of the world!

A new Fire Arm.—A new rifle musket has just been brought to perfection at the United States armory in Springfield, and will hereafter be manufactured for the service on a large scale, both at Springfield and at Harper's Ferry. It weighs about nine and one-half pounds, has the rifle barrel, the Maynard primer, and all the improvements of modern science.

Loans of the Rothschilds.—The celebrated banking house of the Rothschilds loaned during the past year $515,000,000, as follows: England, $80,000,000; Turkey, $40,000,000; Sardinia, $10,000,000; Austria, $120,000,000; Russia, first loan, $130,000,000; Russia, second loan, $100,000,000; England, on exchequer bills, $35,000,000.

Educational.—About thirty citizens of Norwich, Conn., have endowed a free high school in that city, with $84,000, of which $50,000 is a permanent fund, and propose to endow it still further so that every school district in the county may send one scholar free of charge.

The Telegraph in former Times.—Kepler affirmed that he held conversations with a friend at some distance by the aid of two magnets—each attached to alphabets,—the movements made by the one sympathetically reproducing themselves in the other.

A true Reply.—A damsel was once asked, "When a gentleman and lady quarrel, and each considers the other at fault, which of the two ought to be the first to advance towards a reconciliation?" Her answer was, "The best-hearted and wisest of the two."

Town Libraries—Donation.—James Draper, Esq., of Weymouth, Mass., has recently made a donation of $200 to the public library in that town. This library already contains two thousand volumes, freely open to all.

Preaching vs. Practice.—Bossuet, says his latest biographer, resorted nightly to the theatre to learn how to carry his drapery and modulate his elocution; he made amends for this weakness by writing vigorously against the stage!

Mechanics' Fair.—The great Industrial Fair of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, next fall, in Boston, will probably prove the finest exposition of mechanical skill ever seen in New England.

Economical.—The Traveller calculates that the snow has saved "each person" this winter from fifty cents to a dollar in the wear and tear of the soles of boots and shoes.

Native Salt.—Dr. Bradley, of Diamond Springs, California, has discovered a locality among the mountains where, in large cavities excavated in the rocks, the natives have, apparently for ages, procured their salt.

A big Ox.—An ox, belonging to Mr. James Buffinton, of Swanzey, Mass., less than six years old, was recently exhibited in Fall River. He weighed on foot 3635 lbs., and girt 9 1-2 feet.

A floating capital joke.—When may a man be said to be literally immersed in business? When he's giving a swimming lesson.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

☞ Terms of the Flag of our Union, $2,00 per annum, invariably in advance, being discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. See imprint on last page.

☞ All persons who are subscribers to The Flag of our Union whether in club or otherwise, who will enclose us $2, stating that they are on the subscription list of the Flag, shall receive Ballou's Pictorial for one year, commencing with the same date their Flag subscription commences.

OLD MAIDS.

If we acquiesce in the sentence of excommunication which society presses upon old bachelors, those half-scissor members of the community, who persist in pursuing lives of single blessedness, in spite of a plethora of marriageable maidens to pick and choose from, we must protest against the practice of heaping ridicule upon the class of single ladies. It is vulgar, it is unjust, it is unmanly. It is a popular fallacy, rife among men, to attribute the maiden state of many ladies to the worst of motives—to malevolence, to coldness of heart, and to downright hatred of what we term, with most undemocratic and unchristian pride, the nobler sex. Many maiden ladies—old maids, if you please; there ought to be no implied reproach in the term—are so from neglect. But neglect does not argue demerit.

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

The judgment of man in matrimonial matters is not so very infallible. He is as often caught by the artificial brilliancy of a flirt, by the audacious challenge of a belle, by the clink of the almighty dollar, or the prestige of an aristocratic name, as by unobtrusive worth, by simple manners, by a true heart and modest beauty. In the very matter of beauty itself, the eye is often deceived. The belle of a season is often belle only in name, and far less lovely than her neglected sister, who is condemned to sit among the wall flowers, while the idol of the hour is whirling in the waltz.

"The ridicule which is often poured forth on unmarried women of a certain age," says a sensible writer, "is very odious, and perfectly uncalled for. The smile of contempt may be reserved for more justly for those women who, instead of being respectable and useful old maids, have married without love, and without any prospect of happiness, merely to escape the odium of a name. These spinsters, about whom, in flippant moments, we say flippant things, are many of them among the most true-hearted and self-denying of their sex. Their lives have been heroic poems, full of musical rhythm and lofty actions; and, could we read their secret history, we should find that, in many instances, they retained their single state, not because they had never met with wooers, but because the troth they had plighted in youth was sacred even unto death, or because, in the spirit of Christian martyrs, they had resolved, for a great purpose, to make a life-long sacrifice. We allow frankly that the single woman has not—if we dare use such a term—such a *chance of happiness* as the woman who, as the cheerful 'house-mother,' has an affectionate husband at her side, and a number of olive-branches springing up around her. But then the law of compensation may be distinctly traced in every position of life. If there are many joys, they are certain to be attended by a multiplicity of sorrows; and if the sphere is more contracted, and joy is like a stranger guest, and pays only angels' visits, then the path is less formidable, the struggle less severe, the haven more easily won.

"The vocation of the single woman is one of disinterestedness and self-denial. It is for her to visit the sick, to relieve the poor, to scatter good deeds from her on all sides, which, like the seed of the husbandman, may spring up and produce an abundant fruitage. It is for her to devise plans of usefulness, and to see them carried out; she must find her home in the hearts of the suffering and sorrowful, her family in the children who have experienced her kindness, and who look up to her for sympathy. It depends on the character of the single woman, and not on her position, whether she meet with a friendly greeting among her circle of acquaintances, and real love from those who know her best, and stand in close relationship with her."

We have seen so many true heroines, so many self-sacrificing martyrs, so many gentle ministering angels in the ranks of ancient maidenhood, the traditional record of the world's benefactors is so full of such, that we have come to regard old maids with reverence and respect. For one malignant retailer of scandal and promoter of domestic strife, we have found twenty pure-minded and gentle women, who would rather cast oil upon the troubled waters of life than add to their disturbance by a breath. Let us then leave the ridicule of old maids to sinful old bachelors, to profane playwrights, and to the dawbers and inditers of penny valentines, who, by the way, ought to be indicted themselves. The age is too enlightened to accept as gospel the traditional prejudices of the past.

Wonderful.—At the American Museum, New York, they have got a strange curiosity—a man who is so tall that his pantaloons have to be woven in a ropewalk. He folds up like a two foot rule, and has to get on his knees to put his hands in his pockets.

Absence of Mind.—The most recent case of absence of mind is that of an editor, who lately copied from an hostile exchange paper one of his own articles, and headed it "Wretched Attempt at Wit."

The Consequences.—Sugar is so high that it is said young gentlemen are obliged to drink their coffee clear and kiss the girls for sweetening.

SAMUEL ROGERS'S TABLE TALK.

What a treat it must have been to breakfast with Samuel Rogers, and hear him relate his personal reminiscences of the great men, the warriors, poets, statesmen, artists, actors, and beautiful women of eighty years ago, the most stirring and Augustan of the world's modern history! The memory of his contemporaries has preserved some of his anecdotes, and here are a few of them:

"I saw Garrick act only once—the part of *Ranger*, in the 'Suspicious Husband.' I remember that there was a great crowd, and that we waited long in a dark passage of the theatre, on our way to the pit. I was then a little boy. My father had promised to take me to see Garrick in *Lear*, but a fit of the mumps kept me at home. Before his retiring abroad, Garrick's attraction had much decreased; Sir William Weller Pepys said that the pit was often almost empty. But, on his return to England, people were mad about seeing him; and Sir George Beaumont and several others used frequently to get admission into the pit before the doors were opened to the public, by means of their friends and tradesmen, who bade them 'be sure, as soon as the crowd rushed in, to pretend to be in a great heat, and to wipe their faces, as if they had just been struggling for entrance.'"——"Boddington had a wretched bad memory; and in order to improve it, he attended Feinagle's lectures on the Art of Memory. Soon after, somebody asked Boddington the name of the lecturer, and for his life, he could not recollect it."——"John Kemble was often amusing when he had had a good deal of wine. He and two friends were returning to town in an open carriage from the Priory (Lord Abercorn's), where they had dined; and as they were waiting for a toll-gate, Kemble, to the amazement of the toll keeper, called out in the tone of Rolla, 'We seek no *change*; and, least of all, such *change* as he would bring us.' When Kemble was living at Lausanne, he used to feel rather jealous of Mont Blanc; he disliked to hear people always asking, 'How does Mont Blanc look this morning?'"——"I once dined with Curran in the public room of the chief inn at Greenwich, when he talked a great deal, and, as usual, with considerable exaggeration. Speaking of something which he would not do on any inducement, he exclaimed, vehemently, 'I would rather be hanged upon seven gibbets.' 'Don't you think, sir, that one would be enough for you?' said a girl, a stranger, who was sitting at a table next to us. I wish you could have seen Curran's face. He was absolutely confounded—struck dumb."——"Lord Nelson was a remarkably kind-hearted man. I have seen him spin a tectotum with his own hand, a whole evening, for the amusement of some children. I heard him once during dinner utter many bitter complaints (which Lady Hamilton vainly attempted to check) of the way he had been treated at court that forenoon—the queen had not condescended to take the slightest notice of him. In truth, Nelson was hated at court; they were jealous of his fame."——"Witticisms are often attributed to the wrong people. It was Lord Chesterfield, not Sheridan, who said, on occasion of a certain marriage, that 'Nobody's son had married Everybody's daughter.' Lord Chesterfield remarked of two persons dancing a minuet, that 'they looked as if they were hired to do it, and were doubtful of being paid.' I once observed to a Scotch lady, 'how desirable it was in any danger *to have presence of mind*.' 'I had rather,' she rejoined, 'have *absence of body*.'"——"Foote was once talking away at a party, when a gentleman said to him, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Foote, but your handkerchief is hall out of your pocket.' 'Thank you, sir,' answered Foote, 'you know the company better than I do.'"

PERSONAL MATTERS.

We often feel tempted to print some of the many kind and laudatory letters which we are constantly receiving, and which express such entire satisfaction and delight in our "Flag" and "Pictorial." The Flag of our Union is now in its *eleventh year*, and though successful from the start, yet it has never numbered so large a list of readers and subscribers as at the present moment. Long experience has enabled us to greatly improve it, economizing the large amount of room its pages afford, so as to give a great variety, and include in each number the productions of many gifted pens. Our careful endeavor is, in addition to the tales and sketches which we publish, also to combine much valuable miscellaneous reading, which, while it shall entertain, shall also instruct, and keep our readers generally fully informed of the discoveries and doings of the great world, at home and abroad. These, with a tone of strict morality, are the characteristics of our publications.

George Sand.—This popular authoress—quite an old woman, by the way, now—is almost as fertile a writer as Alphonse James, or that marvellous story-teller, A. Dumas, Senior. Within the last year she has written the memoirs of her life and five plays. "Flaneur," who tells us thus much in the Boston Post, also assures us that Dumas uses a barrel for an inkstand, which has to be replenished every half hour. *That* story will do for the marines.

Rachel's Age.—Goldsmith says "women and music should never be dated." We can't help that—we have often been asked Rachel's age. We whisper gently in reply that she is forty-six. We have before us a letter from Paris, written in 1839, which describes her debut as "an unlettered girl of seventeen, who has resuscitated Corneille and Racine."

Complimentary.—The editor of the Bunstown Eagle, in speaking of some amateur dramatic performances in his village, says: "The gentleman, whose name we at this moment forget, who played the part of the simpleton, pleased us much—the part seemed quite natural to him."

Memory of Washington.—At the late brilliant Washington ball, given by the Americans in Paris, Lamartine, Cousin, Berryer, and many other of the most distinguished men of France were present.

The Reason.—Some one attributing the distress of Ireland to absenteeism, Sydney Smith remarked that "the misery of the Irish arose not from absentee-ism, but from absent *dinner* ism."

Legal.—A judge in Baton Rouge, La., having forgotten the day fixed by law for the term of court to begin, fined himself $25

A Query.—Why is the letter D cut in two like a dead soldier? Because it is d-parted.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

In Florence, Italy, you can live cheap if you live on oil and maccaroni.

Powers, the sculptor, intimates an idea of returning to America. By the powers!

Two concerts of Jenny Lind in England yielded twelve thousand dollars.

George Steers, the builder of the Niagara, is a native of Washington, D. C.

The present population of New York city is about 650,000. Quite a village!

The dollar mark ($) signifies eight shillings—one dollar.

French is spoken exclusively in many private boarding schools in New York.

Queen Vic. dines at eight o'clock in the evening. She ought to be called the *late* queen.

There is an ass in England who is fond of tobacco—we see nothing wonderful in it.

The revenues of the church in Mexico amount to $28,000,000 per annum.

Gen. Walker bids fair to settle the Nicaraguan question on his own hook.

One house in Cincinnati sold 42,000 flags for Washington's birthday.

Philadelphia lost a million of dollars by ice stoppages last winter.

The fall most liable to injure a person's brain is—to fall in love with a pretty maid.

In one province of China a million people have perished since the revolution.

The little city of Watertown, Wis., recently subscribed $400,000 for railroads.

A lady was lately married at Memphis, Tenn., for the ninth time.

An apothecary of Salem has over his door "all kinds of dying stuff here."

A man shaves with a silver razor when he cuts off his heir with a shilling.

There is more pleasure in giving than receiving—medicine, certainly.

During the past year three hundred and forty-three revolutionary pensioners have died.

Why is the Flag of our Union like the ocean? 'Cause it will never cease to wave.

They fine barbers in England for shaving on the Sabbath day.

ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.

As a contrast to the brutal, bullying tone of some of the English papers, read the following sentences from the London Athenæum, written in a purer and more philosophical spirit: "A war against America would have no single redeeming point. The interests of the two countries are identical. Their moral principles are the same. They have neither a language to separate nor a religion to estrange them. The same blood flows in the veins of their people. They have a common history—a common literature—a common tradition. They possess the same Bible. They read the same Shakspeare and the same Milton. They still drink at the same intellectual fountains, regardless whether the springs lie on the eastern or the western shores of the Atlantic. Irving, Bryant, Bancroft, Hawthorne, Longfellow are admired with as warm an affection in England as are Thackeray, Tennyson, Dickens, Jerrold and Macaulay in America. A war between England and America would be a war of brothers—a war against the affinities of race, the unity of religion, the interchanges of trade—a war against the bounties of nature, the enterprises of genius, the advances of civilization. Such a war would bring sorrow into every Anglo Saxon home, and shame and humiliation into every Anglo Saxon heart, in whatever quarter of the globe it beats. Such a war would close the gospel for nearly half the Christian world!"

Sharp Work.—Professor Gould, in a recent lecture on astronomy, at New Orleans, said, when the great book of Copernicus was being published in 1543, the populace were so exasperated against his new doctrine that they threatened to destroy the printing office, and "printers set it up with a composing stick in one hand and a gun in the other." They must have had smart compositors in those days. Of course they must have set type with their teeth, both hands being occupied.

Cunning.—A gentleman in New Orleans caught a fellow picking his pocket the other day, when the rogue turned to him, and said, "Here's twenty dollars, if you'll let me go and say nothing about it." The gentleman, who had no scruples about compounding a felony, consented; but after the thief had departed, he found the rascal had bribed him with his own money. Pretty cool operation, that.

Buttons.—The buttons on the coat of John Hancock were of silver, of American manufacture. The device, a shepherd shearing his sheep —"no noto," "you gain more by our lives than by our deaths." Many of our bucks would have no objection to such buttons if they could get credit for the coat and trimmings. The motto would then apply to the tailor.

The Baltic.—The steamship Baltic was recently docked for the inspection of her copper. She has crossed the Atlantic eighty times, running a distance of *two hundred and fifty thousand miles*, and yet when taken into dock her copper was found to be without a wrinkle.

Touching—That last epistle of a gentleman, who was sentenced to be hanged, to his loving wife: "Dear Mary, I was hanged yesterday, and died like a man, so no more at present from your loving husband."

A Jew Tantalus.—A hungry Jew eyeing a ham very affectionately, was banteringly asked what he was saying to it. He replied, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

New Hotel.—A splendid new hotel, of white marble, six stories high, is to be built on the corner of English and Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia.

A Fact.—A broker doubles his money every time he folds up a bank bill.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL
DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"Walpurgis Night," a German legend by Alice May.
"My Native Vale," verses, by Orville Fraser.
"A Scrub in the Forest," romance by Esther B Stratton.
"The Mollah's Stratagem," an Eastern story, by Horace B. Stanford.
"Be gentle, be good," lines, by Blanche D'Antoni.
"The Spirits," a story, by John Brunswerk.
"The Old Man to his Wife," poem, by Marion.
"To the March Wind," verses by Frank Ferlote.
"Amy's Valentine," a tale, by Mary L. Merry.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Representation of a Ball given on board the United States frigate Cumberland, at Spezzia.
Picture of a New Zealand Chief, and the carved stern of a New Zealand Canoe.
A superb engraving, occupying two entire pages, giving a view of California Emigrants and the Last Day on the Plains, one of the most striking and effective engravings we have ever given.
Portrait of Rev John O. Choules, D. D.
Departure of the Conscript.
Return from the War.
View of the Palace of Stolzenfels, on the Rhine.
Representation of Ehrbreitstein and Coblentz, cities of Germany.

, The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ One copy of The Flag and one copy of the Pictorial, when taken together, for $4 00.

Foreign Items.

The Allies have now one hundred and eighty thousand troops in the Crimea.

Stockholm is to be fortified by land and sea; including the valley of Maalar.

Great energy is manifested in Russia in advancing railways.

Catharine Hayes, it is said, loses twenty-seven thousand dollars by the failure of Messrs. Saunders & Brennan, of San Francisco.

There are in Russia six thousand miles of telegraph wires, all of which are continually used for official despatches.

An arrangement has, it is said, been entered into between thirty-two brokers and capitalists of Paris and London, to participate in common in great industrial and commercial undertakings.

Iron shipbuilding is making rapid progress on the Tyne and other rivers in the north of England, and promises in a few years to produce a revolution in the carrying trade of the country.

There exists in China much ill will between the Americans and English. The consuls of the two nations at Hong Kong have had an outbreak, and there are prospects of a very pretty quarrel.

The price of tallow in Russia has risen to an astounding degree—over two dollars a pound. The Russians it will be remembered, *eat* tallow as Americans eat pumpkin pie or apple sauce, and use it extensively in cooking.

Omar recently demanded of the Porte the appointment of Minister of War, with power of Commander-in-chief of all Turkish forces. On being refused, he sent in his resignation, which has been accepted.

Herr Ander, the tenor singer so popular at Vienna, generally reported to be the first tenor in Germany, who appeared two or three seasons ago at our Royal Italian opera, died the other day at Vienna. He was buried with state and honor.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

A man must possess fire in himself before he can kindle up the electricity that thrills the great popular heart.

As fortitude suffers not the mind to be dejected with any evils; so temperance suffers it not to be drawn from honesty by any allurements.

White hair is the chalk with which time keeps its score—two, three, or fourscore, as the case may be—on a man's head.

Providence is like a curious piece of tapestry, made of a thousand shreds, which single, appear useless; but put together, they represent a beautiful history.

Cumberland, in one of his comedies, makes a husband say, "Good nature in a wife is like gold leaf on a pill. It does not alter the dose, but it makes it go down."

Keep your temper in dispute or quarrel. As your opponent warms, do you cool down. The cool hammer fashions the red hot iron into any shape needed.

A firm faith is one of the best divinities; a good life is the best philosophy; a clear conscience the best law; honesty the only true policy; and temperance the best physic.

Praise not people to their faces, to the end that they may pay thee in the same coin. This is so thin a coinweb, that it may with little difficulty be seen through; 'tis rarely strong enough to catch flies of any considerable magnitude.

Secrecy has been well termed the soul of our great designs; perhaps more has been effected by concealing our real intentions, than by discovering those of our enemy. But great men succeed in both.

He that never suffered extreme adversity, knows not the full extent of his own depravation; and he that has never enjoyed the summit of prosperity, is equally ignorant how far the inquiry of others can go. For our adversity will excite temptations in ourselves, our prosperity in others.

Joker's Budget.

An earthquake is termed a "tall specimen of ague" in California.

"My mine to me a kingdom is," as the California gold digger said.

Why is an ailing deer like a depressed man? Ans.—Because he is a *hart* sick (heart-sick.)

Why is the letter S a friend of the Maine Liquor Law? Ans.—Because it turns wine into swine.

Punch thinks the abolition of the corn laws the most important cereal work ever given to the public.

When is the marriage ceremony decidedly fishy? Ans.—When the bride receives her ring (her-ring.)

Often the scene at the playhouse, which beggars description, plays the same trick with the manager's.

Punch, in speaking of "sickness extraordinary," tells how a man "boiled a door and threw up a window."

She that marries a man because he is "a good match," must not be surprised if he turns out "a Lucifer."

A joker says he would like to see George Law as President, because we seldom see law and justice associated.

Never confide in a young man; new nails leak. Never tell your secret to the aged; old doors seldom shut closely.

"Sambo, what do de preacher mean'd by 'perseverance' in his sarmint?" "Why, it means just to hang on, and not let go, you black nigger, don't you see?"

Upon the marriage of one of her companions, a little girl about eleven years of age, of the same school, said to her parents, "Why, don't you think Amelia is married, and she hasn't gone through fractions yet?"

Quill and Scissors.

In the Peace Congress, article No. 11, Punch lays down as follows: "No strangers to be admitted, with the exception of Lords Clarendon and Cowley." Kossuth says this is a "precious rule and quite true; they are strangers—uninitiated strangers; only they are not spectators—they are dupes."

There is living at present a family of five persons, named Benham, natives of Middlebury, Conn., whose united ages amount to 425 years. A brother and one sister reside in M., whose ages are respectively 85 and 89; one resides in Derby, Vt., who is 87; one in Woodbridge, who is 85; and one in Watertown, who is 81.

In 1829, Western Canada had but 196,000 inhabitants, and its assessable property (real and personal estate) was estimated at £2,500,000. In 1854 the population had increased to 1,237,660; and its assessable property, not including the public lands and the timber, or the minerals upon them, amounted to more than £50,000,000.

It is stated that the value of all the fences built in the United States, is from $400.000 000 to $600,000,000. The cost of the fences in Pennsylvania alone, is estimated at $100,000,000—or about $10,000,000 per year. In many instances the fences have cost more than the lands they enclose.

The Savannah News makes mention of two nuggets of gold, one weighing 1400 and the other, 1031 dwts., valued at $24,000, which were the product of 70 1-2 hours' work of the crushing machine upon refuse ore, so called, not taken from the principal vein, in the Parks mine, Columbia County, Georgia.

The Chicago Times says a piece of ground in that city, 40 by 40 feet situated on an alley on Clark Street, between South Water and Lake Streets, was sold a few days since for $24,000. The Journal says the ground would have to be covered with $1 bills two deep to pay for it.

It is said that there are a great many claimants in Washington, from Greytown, demanding satisfaction from the government for the loss sustained by the attack upon that place by the Cyane a year ago.

The Burlington (Iowa) Telegraph says that contracts for buildings to be erected in that city during the present year, have already been entered into, involving the expenditure of half a million of dollars.

A gentleman, formerly a resident of Philadelphia, but now of the far West, travelled with a horse and sleigh three hundred miles on the ice in the Mississippi River, while on his way to Philadelphia.

Gold medals to the value of $1500 have been ordered by the City Council of Portsmouth, Va., to be presented to the surgeons at the Naval Hospital there, for their attention to the sick during the epidemic.

The Bath (Me) Tribune says that within less than two months, eight persons have died in that city whose united ages amounted to six hundred and seventy years, giving an average of 83 years and 9 months to each of the deceased.

Dr. Marshall Bayliss, the phrenologist, well known throughout Virginia, who recently emigrated to Kansas, has come into possession of $30,000, by gaining a suit in the court of appeals.

Thomas Francis Meagher has entered into partnership with an American lawyer named Campbell. They are henceforth to be known under the firm of Meagher and Campbell.

The Supreme Court of Vermont, at its recent session at Rutland, granted nine divorces. Three of the applications were made by the husbands, the rest by the wives.

The gold crop of California during the last year amounted to nearly thirty millions of dollars. Twenty-two millions were coined at the mint in San Francisco.

Several of the insurance companies of Providence have resolved not to insure buildings any part of which are occupied for the sale of intoxicating drinks, or for gambling purposes.

The "Rosin weed," (*Sulphium sacciniatum*) of the western prairies, has the extraordinary property of poisining north and south. The cause of this polarity is yet to be discovered.

A beautiful yacht is to be constructed at Philadelphia for Commodore Stockton. She is to be 56 feet in length, 19 feet beam, and 5 feet hold.

One thousand young cows, with calves, were recently sold at Los Angeles, California, for $15,000.

A law has passed both houses of the Kentucky legislature which prohibits billiards, ten-pin alleys, etc.

Kate Hayes, it is said, has realized a fortune of $200,000 by her singing.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Alphonso Wolcott to Miss Lucy A. Woodworth, both of Vermont.
By Rev Mr. Streeter, Mr. Walter H. Kimball, of Chicago, Ill. to Miss Phebe A Gordon.
By Rev. Mr. Parker, Mr. Samuel Carter to Mrs. Mary Ann Babcock.
By Rev. Mr. Mason, Mr. John S. Powell to Miss Lucy W. Howe.
By Rev. Mr. Thompson, Mr. George M. Clark to Miss Elizabeth Burns.
At East Boston, by Rev. Mr. Clark, John Payne, Esq., of Canterbury, Conn. to Miss Helen Clifton.
At Roxbury, by Rev. Mr. Anderson, Mr. Jerome B. Taft to Miss Arabella Jones
At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Pratt, Mr. Jerome Rich to Miss Emily A. Spofford.
At Somerville Centre, by Rev Mr Kallock, Mr. Matthew F. Wilkins to Miss Hannah Farnsworth, both of Boston.
At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Ellis, Mr. Samuel L. Walker to Miss Mary Ann Grover.
At Danvers, by Rev. Mr. Chaffin, Mr. Moses Goodwin to Miss Mary Elizabeth Hood
At Dorchester, Mr George F. Clough, of West Amesbury, to Miss Hannah P. Hanson of Salisbury.
At Lowell, by Rev. Mr. Eddy, Mr. James C. W. Richards to Miss Mary Jane Wallace, of Hill, N. H.
At Worcester, by Rev. Mr Adams, Mr. Enoch Hammond to Mrs. Esther A. Hawkins.
At Gardner, by Rev. Mr. Ashley, Mr. Daniel McFarlng to Miss Harriet Kendall.
At Nantucket, by Rev. Mr. Hopworth, Elihu Swain, Esq. to Miss Alice S. Mary.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. William Tremaine Clark, printer, 32; Mr. Alfred Sanger, 34. Mr. Michael Healy, 58; Widow Abigail A. Perkins, 64. Mr. Stephen Lynch, 62. Mrs. Eliza Chamberlin, 26. Mrs. Lewis A. Loomis, 34; Widow Martha Damon, of Wayland, 98; Widow Sarah Thaxter, 69; Mr James S Pollard, 35; Miss Maria Augusta Granger, Widow Maria Ulman, 76; John Wheeler, Esq., 76; Miss Charlotte C. Sidbridge, 15; Mr. Benjamin Brown, 56; Mrs. Mary Hemenway, 56
At Chamberlaport, Mr. Seth W. Gay, 57.
At Dorchester, Miss Emeline Clark, 27.
At Milton, Mrs. Mary S., widow of the late Mr. Francis T. Hastings, 51.
At Newton Centre, Miss Catharine Prentice, 63.
At Dedham, Mrs. Polly, widow of the late Samuel Sweet, Esq., 76
At Salem, Widow Nancy Lane, 66; Miss Priscilla Webb, 80; Mr John Chipman, 72; Mrs Ann Bowen, 28; John J. Devereux, Esq.; Miss Caroline Maria Pabee, 19.
At Danvers, Mrs. Hannah, widow of the late Den. Bamsdle Kent, 80
At Andover, Mrs. Fannie E., wife of Mr. D. H. Atwood, and daughter of Dr. Jacob Bancroft, 27.
At Newburyport, Mr. Lowell Crocker, 68.
At Lawrence, Mrs. Susan Hyde, 91.
At Pepperell, Mrs. Anna, widow of the late Luther Bancroft, Esq., 75.
At West Bradford Mrs. Amelia, wife of Dea. William Piper, 67; Capt. Asa Dickinson, 78.
At Colchester, Mr. Jacob Chase, 56.
At Westport, Mrs. Sarah, widow of the late Mr. Archibald Wood, 69.
At Rutland, Mr. Barzillai Miles, 93.
At Montgomery, Ala., Widow Priscilla Clark, 86.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE RIPPLING SEA.

BY CARLO CARRINGTON.

Gilding o'er the rippling sea,
Come sail, my love, with me;
Why must I roam and leave thee here,
While I am on the sea,
While I am on the sea—
To tarry still O do not seek,
But come with me at morning break.

A joy thou hast not tasted yet,
Is travelling on the sea;
The pleasure that I find in it
I wish to share with thee,
I wish to share with thee—
Then do not stay to mourn the time,
But come with me to another clime.

Then wilt not fear the danger, love,
Whilst I am near to thee;
The arm that round thee now is thrown,
Shall thy protection be,
Shall thy protection be—
Then say thou'lt come and make the sea
Thine only home while 'tis for me.

I would not tempt thee to forsake
Thine home to come with me,
Were I not sure that I could make
Thee happier o'er the sea,
Far happier o'er the sea—
In place of friends that thou wilt leave,
I'm then thine own—how canst thou grieve?

Hurrah! we're on the bright blue sea,
My bark, my love, and me;
Our sails are trim—we skim with ease
Across the rippling sea,
Across the rippling sea—
Away we speed to spend the time
Of sweetest love in a foreign clime.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE GIPSEY'S GRATITUDE.

BY M. V. ST. LEON.

It was toward the close of a summer's afternoon, and the warm, still rays of sunshine lay upon the broad lands and thickly wooded park of Sir Anthony Neville. On a slight eminence, facing the lake, stood the family mansion, an elegant building in the Elizabethan style. A balcony had been added to the front of the house, which, as it received a current of air at all times, was a favorite promenade for the family. Two persons were now pacing to and fro upon it; but not to gaze at the gorgeous sunset, for they were engaged in earnest conversation. The elder of the two was Sir Anthony himself, and although sixty years had silvered his hair, they had not taken away the erect figure, or traced a wrinkle on his full, ruddy face. At first sight, he presented a fine specimen of the old English gentleman, but a further examination dispelled this pleasing impression; there was a disagreeable expression of deceit in the glassy, large, light blue eyes, and a shadow of low cunning and cruelty about the small, full mouth; and the lower part of the face projected beyond the eyes and forehead. After a careful scrutiny one would have hesitated to trust too much to Sir Anthony.

His companion was a young man of about twenty-six, and although youth and health gave him that advantage which those possessions never fail to impart, yet Reignald Neville had not one sincere friend in the world, and the father and son were so congenial in their natures, that the difference in their ages was quite overlooked. But Reignald was totally different in externals—here all resemblance ceased; for his figure was tall, and although athletic, well made, while his Roman features, and brown hair and eyes, were inherited from his mother. His dress was well chosen; for, although it affected the height of the mode, the colors were dark, and their cut adapted to display his fine figure to advantage. As the pair continued their walk, Sir Anthony occasionally glanced down the avenue, and that portion of the highway not hidden by the trees. As the minutes wore on, an impatient expression crossed his face, as he apparently sought in vain for some object in the distance, and at last, breaking from the thread of the conversation, he exclaimed:

"What can have detained her, Reignald?"

"Your impatience makes the time seem longer; it is hardly sunset, and—hark! I believe I hear carriage wheels now."

At this moment a coach turned the angle of the road, setting all doubt at an end, and Sir Anthony descended to welcome the expected guest, while young Seville lingered behind a moment to arrange his curls and re-adjust his cravat. The gentlemen were standing in the hall, when a carriage, with the Neville arms on the panel, drove up to the front entrance; the steps were let down, and a bright sparkling face appeared, while Reignald advanced to assist the young lady in alighting.

"Welcome, fair cousin!" he exclaimed, with a fascinating smile. "We are highly honored by your visit, which has been impatiently expected."

"Nay, nay, cousin Reignald, a less elaborate greeting would please me better; do not think a few years of London life have changed my simplicity loving nature."

"*Mille pardons!* I did not know but the voice of compliment and flattery had become everyday language, until plain words might sound uncouth to your ears."

"Not at all; so please remember that I am heartily tired of phrases which mean nothing."

Sir Anthony now came forward and conducted his niece into the drawing-room, where, after a few minutes' conversation, he said:

"Well, Geraldine, I do not see that the last five years have altered your mind in the least—the same practical, acute thoughts, and quick, independent manner; but your face is more womanly, and I see you have caught the gloss of fashion, which, let poets say what they will, sets off a fine woman wonderfully."

"That being the case, you will excuse me if I request permission to retire, in order to present a better specimen of fashion than I can possibly flatter myself I do at this moment."

Sir Anthony rang the bell, and directed the young woman who answered the summons to accompany Miss Glenvylle to her room. The door had scarcely closed, when the father and son exchanged glances.

"She will do!" observed the younger worthy, with a sagacious nod.

"You will have to play your cards well, my boy; that girl has a will of her own."

"Other people have, too; I have not been accounted unsuccessful hitherto, sir."

"I think you will find a little more difficulty here, however; but it is not gallantry that will win your cause—plain, frank speech, and not too perceptible a preference at first; nothing disposes a woman to look more favorably on any man than a becoming shade of indifference."

"I shall not fail to profit by your advice, sir; especially as it perfectly coincides with my experience." And the young man sauntered off through the shrubbery, while Sir Anthony took the direction of the stables.

Geraldine Glenvylle was the only child of Sir Anthony's sister, for whom he had always manifested more affection than toward any other human being; and at the time of her death, which happened when Geraldine was about fifteen, the latter had been visiting at her uncle's, and Reignald had amused himself with studying his very original cousin. But at the death of her father, soon after, great was the mortification of Sir Anthony to find that he was only appointed guardian in case of Lord Manby's decease; and thus the broad estates and well filled coffers of his fair niece seemed as far from Sir Anthony's control as ever. But at last everything had worked to his wishes, and he was awaiting the arrival of the young ward at the commencement of this story, and plotting with his son to secure her for the latter.

Many were the offers which Geraldine had refused; for the only man whom she had ever admired had not yet spoken of love, although she well knew that he was devoted to her. But Guy Carleton, although of a high family, was poor and proud, and that alone had prevented his seeking to win her whom he loved; for he feared the world might misconstrue his motives, and his sensitive nature shrank from being called a fortune-hunter, although scarcely a lady of his acquaintance remembered that his rent-roll was of the shortest description, or would not have thought him cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of her fortune.

Such was the tenor of Geraldine Glenvylle's thoughts, as she sat before the mirror, while a waiting-maid, who had been chosen by Sir Anthony, arranged her luxuriant, soft ringlets, which had been disordered during her journey. Forgetting the presence of any one, Geraldine closed her reverie with a sigh, and looking up, suddenly encountered the steady, searching gaze of the waiting-woman in the mirror. There was a singular, curious expression in the girl's face that startled Geraldine; but the moment their eyes met, a vivid flush rose to the waiting-maid's face, and she gazed intently at her work, while, roused by this circumstance to examine the girl's countenance, Geraldine studied her reflection in the glass.

The peculiar style of her complexion struck Miss Glenvylle. From beneath a cap of lace, gleamed the bright, faint golden hue of her hair, and a curl on either side shaded a face of considerable beauty, but an unusual brilliancy and whiteness of complexion was rendered still more remarkable by eyes of the darkest hue—so black, indeed, that the pupil was not distinguishable from the iris. The shape of her features was also singular, being broad at the forehead, and tapering toward the chin, which was narrowed almost to a point. Yet she was beautiful and prepossessing, had it not been for a certain expression of deceit and treachery in those soft, night-black eyes.

"Lucilla, were both your parents English?" inquired Geraldine.

"Neither of them; my father was Italian and my mother German; but I came to this country when I was not more than twelve years old, in the service of Lady Neville."

This allusion to her aunt produced another reverie on the part of Geraldine, and in a few minutes her toilet was completed, and she rejoined Sir Anthony in the drawing-room.

While Miss Glenvylle and her host recalled many incidents of the past, which not unfrequently brought the moisture to Geraldine's eyes, a very different conversation was being held in a path that wound through the park in the direction of the lake. Reignald Neville was sauntering down this walk, with a very perceptible frown on his face, while by his side was Lucilla, with a flush of anger on her cheek, and a flashing resentment in her eyes.

"Yes, I know you hate me now—this haughty, handsome girl has won your love at first sight, and Lucilla is in your way; her presence is hateful to you!" and the tones of her voice were raised above their natural key, and tremulous with indignation.

"You are a foolish girl, Lucilla! I tell you that I still love you; and why cannot you be satisfied?" her companion replied, impatiently.

"Why cannot I be satisfied? Do *you* ask that question, Reignald Neville? Do you think that one who has proved her devotion by so many services can be satisfied with a passing thought, while she sees another engrossing your whole heart!"

"O well, Lucilla! If it has come to this—if I cannot do a single act that does not fully meet your approbation, without having my obligations to you forced upon me, I think it is time we part; benefits become burdens when continually paraded to one's notice."

"Reignald Neville," replied the girl, turning very pale, "you know I have never before mentioned that you were indebted to me; true love keeps no debit and credit system. If there was any obligation, I considered it one to be permitted to serve you in any way. You may find a fairer face and a higher name, but you will never meet with another heart that will study and anticipate not only your words and looks, but your very thoughts, even before you know them yourself." And the girl clasped her hands so closely together that the blood seemed about to start from her finger tips.

Neville seemed touched by this unexpected display of feeling; for Lucilla was one of that quiet class of persons, whose affections are too deeply rooted to be often on the surface. Turning to her, and taking her hand, he said, kindly:

"Why, Lucilla! I did not know you had so much of the Italian in your composition—I would tell you to think no more about Geraldine Glenvylle, but I know that would be a useless command, therefore, although I am grieved to pain you, yet you must listen to reason. No doubt you think I am the heir to a large estate and a fine property; but these broad lands are heavily mortgaged, and the term for redemption has nearly expired. Geraldine must enable me to win them back, and a speedy marriage is the only means of relief. Yes, Lucilla, within three months Geraldine Glenvylle must be my wife."

Lucilla uttered a sharp, quick cry, and pressing her hand to her heart, turned away her face, which was of a deathly pallor, and for an instant everything was dark before her.

"So you will understand," Neville continued, "that I must marry Geraldine, although I may not love her so well as some others; and if you see the greatest devotion, apparently, you know that some acting is necessary, and it need not make you jealous. If you will help me in this scheme, and not vex me, you shall be no loser by my marriage; but if you attempt to thwart or provoke me by reproaches, I will see that you never have the chance to do so again—beware! for the hour that you persecute me, that hour we part forever!" And his voice, which had been soft and persuasive at first, was now slightly raised, and very stern, while a rising flush betokened inward irritation.

But Lucilla, with pale and trembling lips, laid her hand on his arm, and, with beseeching eyes, said slowly, and in a faint voice:

"Reignald, do not speak so harshly. I have ever loved and obeyed you; and why should you doubt me now? I had not thought—I was not prepared for anything so sudden. For the last few weeks, even before Geraldine arrived, you were absent-minded, and I could not win even a look from you; but when she came, I knew at once the cause of your indifference and abstraction, and although I feared her influence, I flattered myself that I exaggerated the evil. But since I can serve you, do you think, Reignald," she continued, with a burst of vehemence, "do you think I would not do anything to secure you the lands that are yours by right, and belonged to your ancestors before you? And whether you love me or no, I will not falter; but when Neville Hall shall own Geraldine Glenvylle for its mistress, you will not perhaps forget one who gave up her own happiness to promote yours."

Neville turned quickly round with a smile of surprise and pleasure, and grasping both her hands, he exclaimed:

"Lucilla, you *are* a good-hearted girl; and as to forgetting you, my pretty one, I shall never do that while I have those bright eyes to remind me of your claims to my affection. But my absence will be noticed, and I must return to the house. Will you walk back with me?"

The affectionate tone and attentive manner brought a bright, animated expression to Lucilla's countenance, and they walked slowly back, while Neville, in low, earnest tones, instructed her in the part he meant to play, and her share in it. Arriving at a side entrance, he repeated his last direction, and as Lucilla earnestly assured him that she understood perfectly, he took her hand, saying:

"What a fine color this walk has given you! I declare, you are handsomer than when I first saw you! However, Lucilla, this is a good-natured thing in you, and I shall not forget it. You *are* a kind girl to help me out of this trouble, and I am really very fond of you." And in his satisfaction at securing Lucilla's co-operation in the affair, he pressed her hand affectionately, touched his lips to her forehead, and bidding her good-night, entered the house.

Lucilla stood still an instant, repeating to herself with delight the scanty thanks and compliments just uttered. Another person might not have considered herself repaid for such a sacrifice as this young girl had made, even if the one for whom she had resigned so much should condescend in the flush of his delight to say, "You *are* a good-hearted girl, and I am really fond of you!" But perhaps another may not have lived almost in a state of starvation upon a few crumbs of affection, coming at long, weary intervals; and thus it was that Lucilla stood motionless for a few moments, making up for the scarcity of the approving words by repeating them over and over, till finally she crossed the threshold with a happier heart than half an hour ago she had thought possible ever to carry again.

Twilight was coming on, and Geraldine Glenvylle stood at a casement in her window, looking forth on the beautiful park which spread out like a lawn, and was dotted with clumps of aged oaks, while occasionally a stately deer would emerge from a neighboring thicket, and crossing the rivulet at the foot of the grounds, disappear among the foliage. But after gazing a few minutes at this lovely scene, Geraldine turned from the window, and opening a casket that lay upon her dressing-table, she took from it a letter, seated herself by the toilet stand, leaned her arm on it, and commenced a re-perusal of the note. As she read, an expression of anxious thought crossed her face, slightly contracting the clear, open brow, and casting a shadow around the parted lips.

While in the midst of the letter, a light footstep sounded in the passage outside the room, but it did not reach the ear of Geraldine, who was completely absorbed. In another moment the door, which stood ajar, was gently pushed open sufficiently to admit the lithe form of Lucilla, who stole softly forward, and looking over her mistress's shoulder, glanced at the contents of the note. As her eye ran over the lines, an expression of deep sadness settled in her dark eye, and after an instant, she brushed a tear from her lashes; but the movement was reflected in the mirror beside Geraldine, who catching a glimpse of something white pass up and down, hastily raised her eyes. But Lucilla had adroitly fled from the room with a noiseless step, and concluding she had been startled by a fancy, Geraldine resumed her reflections.

Miss Glenvylle had been a resident of Neville Hall for upwards of a fortnight, and during that time she had suspected a design on the part of her uncle and cousin to obtain possession of her property, and herself as an appendage; but Reignald had never been a great favorite with her, and with a pre-occupied heart he had but little chance of success, even if Geraldine had not suspected that her cousin's frank, generous manner (so totally different from what she remembered) was wholly assumed.

But now that Guy Carleton had addressed her in glowing, eloquent words, she replied favorably, giving him permission to speak to Sir Anthony. But to her great surprise, a week had elapsed without bringing any answer; and as the days passed on, Geraldine became indignant, while Neville's conduct confirmed her suspicions that he was intending to offer his hand for her acceptance. In vain she warded off numerous palpable hints, Reignald was determined to be heard, and one day the dreaded question came. Geraldine gave a kind but decided refusal, and remembering the singular silence of Carleton, she checked the avowal that she loved another, which had hastily risen to her lips. As she parted from her cousin, the malignant expression in his eye escaped the young girl's notice, and she entered the hall unconscious of the dark, half-formed plans of evil which were floating in Reignald Neville's mind, as he slowly sauntered in the direction of the side door, at which he had parted from Lucilla on the evening of their interview. Opening the door, and finding the passage clear, he ascended the staircase that led to Geraldine's apartments, and as he stood upon the landing, softly whistled a few notes from an opera. Immediately the sound of a key in the lock was heard, and Lucilla, coming from the upper end of the entry with a quick step, joined Neville in silence, while they turned down the same path which they had taken on a similar occasion, and were soon out of sight.

Meanwhile Geraldine had entered the drawing-room where Sir Anthony was seated, and in a few minutes her uncle broke the silence by saying:

"Do you remember Oakdale Manor?"

This was an estate which Geraldine's mother had brought her husband at their marriage, and the young heiress had spent many happy days there in her childhood; therefore it was with a heightened color and sparkling eyes that she replied:

"Remember Oakdale Manor! I shall not easily forget the delightful hours I have spent there with my dear mother."

"Should you like to visit it again?" inquired Sir Anthony, unheeding the enthusiasm of his fair nicece.

"Indeed, I would. I should prefer to live there than here. But do you think of going, uncle?"

"I had thought of fitting up the place for you. I suppose I should spend a good deal of my time there; but with a house full of servants you would not mind occasional absences, I suppose?"

"I should like nothing better than to make it my home—it is so secluded, and the scenery is so lovely; it would be my choice even if I had no endearing associations connected with the place."

"Very well. I have had the apartments put in order, presuming you would be pleased with the arrangement, and you can go any time you wish, as I have nothing in the way of business to prevent my accompanying you whatever day you appoint."

"This is very kind of you, indeed, my dear uncle; and in order to show you that I appreciate the pains you have taken, I will be ready this day week."

"That is prompt! I see you are as impulsive as ever, Geraldine. Never mind," he said, seeing the color rise; "'delays are dangerous,' says the proverb, and I think there is a good deal of truth in those ancient maxims;" and Sir Anthony smiled rather unpleasantly as he glanced at Geraldine.

On retiring to her room that night, instead of calling for Lucilla, Geraldine sat down by the open window; for the stars were shining brightly, although the moon was not yet up; and as she sat alone, with the light shaded carefully, her thoughts involuntarily turned to Guy Carleton and his singular silence. "For even if he had not received my answer, he would have written again, supposing there had been some mistake about his own letter reaching me."

The longer Geraldine reflected upon the matter, the less indignation she felt against Carleton; for her reason told her he was no trifler, and that his pride and nice sense of honor forbade the supposition that he would descend to a low jest or cowardly insult, and trusting that time would explain all, Geraldine rose with the intention of leaving the window, when the sound of voices in the grounds beneath caused her to pause an instant.

"Well, I say what I said before—Geraldine Glenvylle has refused me; but I will give her no peace, and if fair means will not accomplish my object, persecution shall. I tell you she shall write her name Geraldine Neville within three months!"

The energy of the speaker's tone, together with hearing a new appellation so suddenly applied to herself, caused the blood to mount to the young girl's face, and without waiting to hear the reply of her cousin's unknown companion, Geraldine dropped the curtain with a sickening sensation of disgust, and removing the shade from the lamp, rang for Lucilla.

Several minutes elapsed before the girl entered, and her mistress was too deeply occupied with her own feelings to notice the glow on the waiting-woman's cheek; but she observed:

"You are not quite prompt enough, Lucilla."

"I was answering Sir Anthony's questions, miss, about your leaving the drawing-room so early this evening."

Geraldine made no comment upon this explanation, but inwardly rejoiced that she was not to be exposed to Neville's threatened persecutions for any length of time.

The week allotted to preparation was soon spent, and accompanied by her uncle and Lucilla, Geraldine set out for Oakdale Manor. After a rather tedious journey, the ruins of an ancient abbey which stood upon a steep height, and directly in front of the Manor, came in sight. The rays of the morning sun shone brightly upon the fresh, dewy foliage, and the foam of a waterfall, which made two distinct descents, sparkled and gleamed as it chafed among the rocks.

A turning in the road brought them into the avenue leading to the Manor, and soon Geraldine stood upon the flagged terrace which extended along the front of the mansion, while the tears rose to her eyes as a host of recollections swept through her mind, and for a moment the voices of the loved and lost seemed mingling with the cool morning breeze that swept around her. But the approach of Sir Anthony dispelled these thoughts, and awoke her from the momentary illusion.

Geraldine had congratulated herself upon escaping from Reignald's attentions, but to her surprise and annoyance, on the second day after her arrival, he dashed up the avenue, announcing his intention of remaining a few weeks. All our heroine's good nature could not prevent the wish that Selim had thrown his rider at the commencement of the journey; but her vexation was changed to positive distress, on discovering that father and son had joined in a covert system of force, and that in case she persisted in refusing to become Neville's wife by fair measures, compulsion might be used. As time passed on, Geraldine's position became more and more unpleasant; for Neville threw off his disguise in a measure, and hinted at disagreeable consequences in case she persisted in her present conduct.

A system of veiled espionage was established, and Geraldine was fully sensible that she was a prisoner, as Lucilla accompanied her in all her walks, and Neville constantly rode with her. On all hands she was fenced in, and there seemed nothing in store for her but misery, as she did not doubt that a forced marriage would be attempted; but she resolved to remain firm, and resist to the last. Her surmises proved to be well founded; for one day Sir Anthony sent for her to join him in the library, and informed her that in ten days she must become the wife of Reignald Neville. Geraldine replied that she should resist every measure, and that no marriage could be valid under compulsion.

But the young girl was far from feeling secure against the united efforts of her uncle and cousin. She was closely guarded, so that escape was impossible, even had she known where to seek protection, and several hours of painful thought were spent in endeavoring to devise some means of relief.

When evening came, Geraldine was in a high state of nervous excitement, and lifting the curtain, she stepped from her chamber into a verandah, hoping the cool air might relieve her aching head. There was something soothing in the stillness, and faint, glimmering light of the newly risen moon. While she thus stood leaning against the railing, a slight rustling in the shrubbery below aroused her attention, and a moment after, a soft, low, cautious whistle, which was repeated.

Geraldine's heart beat rapidly, for it flashed through her mind that some unknown friend was striving to gain her notice without being detected, and leaning over the balcony she gazed intently down. At this moment a figure stepped from the shadow of the wall, and with a wild, incredulous surprise, she beheld Guy Carleton! An exclamation rose to her lips, but Carleton made a sign of silence, and advancing to the verandah, said in a low, slightly agitated voice:

"Geraldine—Miss Glenvylle, pardon my intrusion, but my singular reason must be my excuse. Three days ago I received a note from some person who is evidently well acquainted with your movements, and mine, also; but the only signature was, 'A Friend.' This note stated that you were little better than a prisoner, and that in a week you would be forced to marry your cousin Reignald. But there was one sentence which roused me from an unhappy state of mind into which I had fallen—it assured me that you had replied favorably to my proposal, and the dismissal which I had received was a forgery; that if I wished to save you from certain misery, I must see you and devise some means of escape. Upon the strength of this warning, I have ventured to seek you unasked; it only remains for you to say whether my informant was correct, and if I may consider myself your accepted lover."

Geraldine had listened, as in a dream, to those welcome words; but she now answered Carleton with an earnestness that proved to him how much she had suffered.

"Thank Heaven! I am to be rescued from a cruel persecution. It is true that I wrote to you giving permission to address my uncle; but as I did not receive any further communication from you, and was confident you had not mentioned the matter to Sir Anthony, I did not know what to think of the silence, and trusted that time would explain all. But now all doubts are removed, and I am truly delighted to find that I have not at all mistaken the character of Guy Carleton."

"A thousand thanks for your trust, dear Geraldine; but I must insist upon your giving me a legal right to protect you from the tyranny of your uncle. Do you not see the necessity of so doing?"

"I will not affect to deny that such a course is both wise and prudent, for I have yet two years to wait before I shall be of age, and I would not live an hour longer than is absolutely necessary under this roof."

"And you shall not. I will make immediate preparations for your escape, and to-morrow night, at this time, I will be here again, to appoint the time and place of our meeting. I dare not linger here, for if I should be seen you would be worse off than before, and I deprived of all power to assist you. Remember, to-morrow night at this time; but before I go one word. Our object is to throw off his guard; you had best show submission to his wishes. And a Geraldine, I must leave you—good

Geraldine watched the receding pear amid the foliage, and scarcely prehend the blessed reality before several minutes with her hand p forehead, and then found relief strained nerves in a fit of weep moment, Lucilla entered the chamb somewhat curiously at her mistre had never seen shed a tear, notwith troubles that had pressed so heavily late.

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GERALDINE GLE

The note was sealed and directed vous energy, and turning to Luci tively watched her mistress's various she said:

"Take this to Sir Anthony, and b answer."

Lucilla took the message, and v sight commenced an attack upon th vain; and hoping fortune would be some future period, the girl entered and gave it to Sir Anthony, who op with a little surprise, having recogni writing of his niece. As he glan contents, a marked expression of peared on his features, and after re over very attentively, he turned to exclaimed:

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ou. Remember, to-morrow night at this time; but before I go, let me say one word. Our object is to throw Sir Anthony off his guard; you had best therefore pretend submission to his wishes. And now, my dear Geraldine, I must leave you—good night."

Geraldine watched the receding form disappear amid the foliage, and scarcely able to comprehend the blessed reality before her, stood several minutes with her hand pressed to her forehead, and then found relief for her overstrained nerves in a fit of weeping. At this moment, Lucilla entered the chamber, and gazed somewhat curiously at her mistress, whom she had never seen shed a tear, notwithstanding the troubles that had pressed so heavily upon her of late.

"Lucilla, where is Sir Anthony?"

"In the library, miss."

Geraldine arose with the determination of instantly seeking her uncle, and affecting to submit to his plans; but before she reached the door she hesitated, for her abhorrence of deceit was so great that she feared her ability to assume such a degree of skill in acting as should deceive Sir Anthony. So resuming her seat, she wrote a hurried note, as follows:

"UNCLE,—Rejoice in your wicked triumph if you can, for you have conquered. I am worn out with this mental struggle, and if you can enjoy your cowardly victory, you are more to be despised for your cruel and inhuman firmness, than I for my want of endurance. I will submit to my fate; but I will do so peaceably only on one condition; it is this: During the few brief days that intervene between now and the appointed time, Reignald Neville must not cross my path. I will neither hear nor see him until I am obliged to; and as he will soon possess the enviable privilege of tormenting me through life, I think he can afford me a respite of seven days! GERALDINE GLENVYLLE."

The note was sealed and directed with a nervous energy, and turning to Lucilla, who furtively watched her mistress's various movements, she said:

"Take this to Sir Anthony, and bring me his answer."

Lucilla took the message, and when out of sight commenced an attack upon the seal, but in vain; and hoping fortune would befriend her at some future period, the girl entered the library, and gave it to Sir Anthony, who opened the note with a little surprise, having recognized the handwriting of his niece. As he glanced over the contents, a marked expression of wonder appeared on his features, and after reading it twice over very attentively, he turned to the girl, and exclaimed:

"Lucilla, did Miss Glenvylle actually write this note herself?"

"She did; and she requested me to wait for an answer."

"I do not know what to think of this; take the letter and read it—then give me your opinion of it."

Highly delighted, the girl obeyed, and with astonishment written on every feature, she handed it back with a bewildered air.

"What do you think of this, girl? Is it a trap for us, think?"

"I do not believe it is," replied Lucilla, who had recovered her faculties; "for if she intended to deceive you she would hardly have written a letter, which plainly shows she only wants an opportunity to escape from your power. It is evidently written in angry despair, and perhaps she thought if submission was inevitable, she would make a merit of conforming before force was used."

"You are a shrewd girl, Lucilla," Sir Anthony exclaimed in admiration. "I believe you are right."

"I know it is so," Lucilla replied, as another circumstance flashed upon her mind. "I have something to tell you which is a proof in itself. Even when she evidently admitted the idea that Carleton was false, I never saw any traces of tears, nor while she has been so troubled during the last few weeks, but when I hastily entered the room a short time ago, I found her removing the marks of weeping, and immediately afterward she wrote this note."

"It is no *ruse* then. Weeping! I never saw her in tears in my life; her spirit must be broken, indeed. This is well!" And Sir Anthony began to pace up and down the floor, rubbing his hands softly, and smiling with delight.

"What shall I say to Miss Glenvylle, as your answer?" inquired Lucilla.

"O—yes! You may say that her wishes shall be complied with."

The next morning Sir Anthony informed Geraldine that Reignald had left for Neville Park, to make preparations for the wedding; and although Geraldine knew that her rescue was near at hand, she could not repress a slight shudder at these words. The day passed wearily, and evening found her waiting anxiously for Carleton's coming. At the appointed hour, the same low whistle was heard, and, as before, Geraldine stepped upon the balcony. Assured by her presence that all was well, Carleton advanced, and sheltering himself in the deep shadows from observation, he detailed his plan for her escape.

"On the fourth night from this," he said, "I will be waiting for you behind the old church by the river. I find there was formerly a road that led by the building, and several miles beyond it strikes into the turnpike leading in the direction of London, which is our destination. It is now merely used by cottagers, in the vicinity, as a short cut across; and so many years have passed since the new road was opened that it is nearly grown up. I shall have relays all along the route, so pursuit will be vain. Next Tuesday night I shall be there, and at the entrance of the old road I shall wait from midnight until nearly dawn. It would be useless to set out after that time, as your escape would be discovered in so short a space. Therefore if you should not be able to come Tuesday night, I shall wait every evening until you do."

Geraldine narrated the success of her ruse with Sir Anthony, and fearful of detection, Carleton soon after departed, having informed her that he should not be able to remain in the neighborhood until the appointed night, as there was much to be done before then, and the time was fall short; but in the assurance of future happiness, Geraldine bid him farewell with a light and happy heart.

After this her spirits rose up so joyously from the removal of the heavy burden, which had so long weighed her down, that it was with difficulty that she could repress her feelings, and appear in keeping with her apparent condition. The galling, fettering restraint which had been imposed hitherto, was now relaxed in a measure, and as she felt at ease only when alone, a portion of her time was taken up in solitary walks and rides. On the morning of the second day after Carleton's departure, as Geraldine was walking slowly along a path in the woods, just outside the park gates, an awkward country lad passed by, eyeing her very closely. In a few moments he re-passed, and this time Geraldine's attention was attracted by a lingering in his gait, and a hesitation in his manner, as if he wished to speak, but did not dare to address her. Thinking it very probable that he belonged to one of the cottages on her grounds, and wished to communicate some trouble among the tenants, she resolved to give him an opportunity to speak. So stopping in her walk as she drew near to him, she said:

"Do you wish to say anything to me?"

The lad made an awkward bow, as he replied: "Yees, miss, I hae gotten summat to tell ye." Here he stopped and began searching his pockets, and having drawn from thence a small, thin packet, he continued: "Ye see there wor a foine gentlemon last night as comed and said to I, did I know the young lady to the Manor, and then he say I mun fetch the lily paper i' yan that I had gotten here;" and the boy handed the packet to Geraldine, who unfolded the wrappings with surprise.

What was her astonishment to find a note from Carleton, written hurriedly, but stating that instead of waiting until to-morrow night, she must come that evening, and he would explain his reasons then. Geraldine looked up to ask some questions of the boy, but he was gone, and folding up the note she experienced a feeling of gladness that the hours at Oakdale Manor were shortened. On entering the house, her first act was to pack all her jewels during the absence of Lucilla; and in the afternoon, believing that Carleton was in the immediate neighborhood, she took a ride, hoping to meet him, and ask the reason of this sudden haste; although she did not doubt that he had arranged matters quicker than he expected, and feared any unnecessary delay.

But Geraldine's hopes were not realized—she did not meet with Carleton, and although she caught a glimpse of the boy who had brought the message, before she could reach him he was out of sight. It was not until sunset that she turned her horse's head toward home. As she reached a turn in the road, the uncommon beauty of the scenery arrested her attention, and reining in the gentle animal, Geraldine gazed upon the landscape before her. At her left, the woods swept along in a line, and directly before her lay the river, reflecting the gorgeous hues of the western sky, and spanned by a stone bridge, with four arches. Immediately beyond stood the Manor, surrounded by foliage; and a chain of high mountains across a wide plain, closed the prospect.

As Geraldine gazed admiringly upon the exquisitely blended tints of river, sky and wood, her horse suddenly reared, and would have started violently forward if Geraldine's skill had not enabled her to restrain him. It all passed in an instant, and on raising her eyes to ascertain the cause of this fright, a singular form sprang directly before her, and its wild appearance startled Geraldine. There stood a gipsey woman, of strong, lithe, but muscular build, and so very tall that the young girl half fancied her a man in disguise. But a second look showed that to be a mistake; the woman appeared to be slightly past middle age, and her long grizzled locks were unconfined and uncovered, while over her shoulders was thrown the invariable badge of the race, a scarlet cloak. There was a wild flash in her eye, and a fierce emphasis in her voice, as she abruptly addressed her wondering hearer.

"Geraldine Glenvylle, you have this day received a letter, as you believe, from your lover. Beware how you trust to its contents! As you value your happiness, do not follow a single direction in it. There are those who are plotting your ruin, as you should know, and it is their work. Yonder place is a den of corruption; its inmates have injured me and mine—but my curse is upon them!" and she extended her arm in the direction of the Manor, while a dark, revengeful look settled down on her face. "Beware of that false note!" she continued; "it only seeks your ruin, and Guy Carleton never put pen to paper to write it—again I say, beware!" And waving her hand in a warning manner, the strange intruder disappeared before Geraldine had recovered sufficiently to ask any explanation.

Slowly and thoughtfully she rode the remainder of the way home, and dismounting, answered Sir Anthony's questions concerning her ride in an absent manner, while she escaped to her chamber as soon as possible. Here she compared the note she had received that morning with a former one, and as her critical eye detected no shadow of difference, she exclaimed:

"I was foolish and weak-minded to allow the idle talk of an unprincipled gipsey to influence me for a moment. Why should she interest herself in my affairs? It was very evident that she was only a tool in some person's hand—perhaps my uncle's—or she would not have hurried away before her inability to answer my questions should betray her ignorance. But I will go to-night and approach the place cautiously, so that if I see anything suspicious I can draw back unobserved."

With this determination, Geraldine impatiently waited until the house was still, and then she stole into the garden. Knowing the park gates would be closed, she turned in the direction of the abbey, remembering that the wall was very low by the ruins. She succeeded in gaining the road without any difficulty, and entering the lane, soon reached the church. Before emerging from the trees, Geraldine hesitated a moment; but considering that if Carleton had urgent reasons for appointing an earlier period, her lingering might frustrate all his schemes, she ventured forth.

The night was beautiful; a stillness brooded over the whole scene, and the moon was occasionally crossed by white fleecy clouds, while the stream which wound round the banks shone like a broad silver ribbon; and where the overhanging boughs intercepted the light, the ripples danced and murmured over the rocks. The ancient gray church, with its square tower and roof both covered with ivy that swung its long tendrils in the night breeze, gave a grave and finished aspect to the landscape; and as Geraldine advanced from her shelter, she saw directly before her a carriage drawn up on one side of the road, and a figure, enveloped in a cloak, standing beside it.

All doubt was now at an end, and Geraldine flew forward with a sense of safety, to which she had long been a stranger. What then was her terror at finding herself seized by two men, who sprang from the thicket at her side, and before she could utter a cry, a bandage was closely pressed to her mouth, and she was hurried to the carriage. As the figure, whom she had supposed to be Carleton, opened the door, she saw by the moonlight her dreadful mistake; it was Reignald Neville! In an agony of horror, Geraldine attempted to free herself, but she was like an infant in the grasp of the strong, iron-nerved men who held her, and closing her eyes in despair, she resisted no longer, when a sudden shout fell upon her ear, and she saw Neville in the hands of a new comer, while three lithe, active figures darted from the underbrush by the river, and commenced an attack upon her captors. But fright and exhaustion had conquered, and the instant the ruffians released their hold, she sank senseless to the earth.

When Geraldine recovered her senses and gazed around, a strange sight met her eyes. Everything was unknown to her, and it was some time before she could collect her thoughts sufficiently to remember what had passed, and even then she was ignorant as to whether she was still in the power of her uncle, or not. She was lying upon a rude bed composed of leaves, covered with a blanket, and evidently within some ruin, for the walls were of stone, and the masonry around the gothic casements and doorway, was crumbling to pieces. Through a low, iron grating, Geraldine looked out upon a small sheet of water, surrounded by trees, and through an archway on the other hand, leading into a large green space enclosed by walls, but without a floor, or roof, she saw a curl of smoke rising from a few fagots, around which were clustered several women, and among them she recognized the gipsey who had warned her the day before.

As Geraldine rose up to look about, the woman had caught the sound, and she now came toward her; surveying her fixedly for a moment, she exclaimed:

"I bade you beware of enemies, yesterday—you would not believe me then, do you now?"

"I acknowledge you were right, but you were a stranger, and I did not see how you could know anything about my affairs. I supposed you trusted to cunning, and some few hints you might have received."

"Yes, I know—you thought that because I was a gipsey, I could not be an honest woman. Never mind," she added, seeing Geraldine's confusion, "perhaps I should not have troubled myself to rescue any but Helen Neville's child."

Geraldine started to hear her mother's name from a gipsey's lips, but the woman rejoined:

"Yes, young lady, I only paid a debt when I rescued you from your cruel uncle."

"Then I am safe from him—you assure me that I am beyond his power?" cried Geraldine, eagerly, rising up in her earnestness.

"I do," replied the woman. "Listen while I tell you the service which your mother did for me, and then say whether you think that anything I could do for her child would be too much. When Helen Neville was a fair young girl in her father's house, I was the proud and happy mother of as noble a boy as ever lived. I had but this one child, and I had watched my Gabriel grow up from the infant in my arms, into the handsome, intelligent youth that was without a match among all his comrades.

"About this time, a hard winter was beginning to set in, and those who were poor came near starving. As your grandfather was well aware that although our tents had stood upon the common for years, his property had never suffered, he had been rather lenient towards us. But we were perishing for food, and one evil night my boy was persuaded to join several others, all much older than himself, and they entered the park, and shot a deer. But the noise of the rifles roused the game-keeper, who took them before they could escape.

"Your grandfather was a stern, hard man, and although this was Gabriel's first offence, and he was truly sorry, Sir George Neville would not let him off, and he was sentenced with the others to transportation for life. Then it was I thought I should die, and while I was calling down curses upon the hard heart that had condemned him, Miss Ellen passed by the park gate where I sat. She did not know who I was, for my face was hidden in my hands, but she never passed the poor and suffering without a question, so she now spoke to me. But my grief made me so wicked that I would not answer her; in my heart I almost hated her because Sir George was her father, and when she repeated her question of what was the matter, I looked up fiercely and replied—'because they're murdering me, and my boy!'"

In a moment she understood the whole, and bidding me remain where I was, she turned and left me alone. I did not know nor care what she was going to do. She could not make me more miserable, and fortune would never stoop to do anything for a despised and outcast gipsey woman. But I was already at the gates, and I did not wish to move on, so I laid there on the ground without thinking of time, or place. It might have been several hours that I laid thus, when I heard a step, and the next minute a voice that made me spring up with a cry. There stood Gabriel before me with outstretched arms! Miss Ellen, that angel of mercy, had gone to her father, and after hours of pleading, had succeeded in obtaining my boy's release, and the promise of no further punishment, on condition that he never again repeated the offence.

Not content with this, Miss Neville often sent us provisions during the winter, and I vowed at that time that if ever she, or any whom she loved, were in distress, I would help them if I laid down my life to do it."

"And nobly have you fulfilled your promise," Geraldine exclaimed, as she seized the gipsey's hand, with tears in her eyes, "and it will bring down a blessing upon you."

"I have only done what was more a pleasure than a duty, for I have no reason to love Sir Anthony nor his son."

"But how did you know their plans and mine also?" asked Geraldine.

"All unprincipled men have some person who executes their plans, and of course knows all that is done, and Reignald Neville is not without his drudge. Oliver Jenkins is something besides head game-keeper, and when he came down with his master three weeks ago, he saw my grand daughter, Marian, and took every opportunity to annoy her with his attentions. At last he hinted something about your being forced to marry Reignald Neville, and then it was that I began to listen. I soon found that there was some wicked thing going on, and I encouraged his visiting Marian in my tent, for I discovered that a very little liquor made him quite communicative.

"From him I learnt that you had received and answered a proposal of marriage from a gentleman in London, before your uncle and cousin knew anything about the matter, for they intended to guard you closely, and make you Reignald Neville's wife before long. Lucilla discovered Carleton's letter, and ascertained that you had given him permission to apply to Sir Anthony; immediately upon this, Lucilla, who is expert at imitation, obtained a specimen of your handwriting, and wrote a decided refusal, saying you had changed your mind and dismissed him, hoping he would not attempt to see you. This Reignald despatched to Carleton, hoping that the matter would be at an end, and inasmuch as Carleton was prevented from seeing you, their object was effected.

"But soon they found that force would be required to make you submit to their wishes, and knowing that Oakdale Manor was entirely secluded, and that they would not be liable to visitors, they determined to carry you there and break your spirit by confinement. But Lucilla overheard your second interview with Carleton, to whom I had written, stating your danger, with the assurance that I believed you still loved him. Sir Anthony alarmed to find that Carleton had had an explanation with you, determined to carry you immediately to Neville Park, hoping thereby to baffle Carleton in his search for you until the ceremony was performed.

"All this I obtained from Jenkins, and I hoped that my warning would influence you, but fearful of the turn things might take, I sent my grandson and three of his companions to be on the watch, and if you fell into Reignald's hands, to rescue you. To-night, Carleton will be here, for I despatched a messenger to meet him and conduct him to this place without delay. You now know all, and I hope retribution will fall upon the heads—"

"Stay!" cried Geraldine, "do not curse any one—whatever punishment they need beside their guilty consciences, and the shame which will fall upon them when their conduct is known, Heaven will send."

"The gipsey gazed with admiration at the generous soul which lit up the young girl's noble, animated features, and replied, "There Ellen Neville spoke!—well, there are some natures but little below the angels."

Before evening Carleton arrived, and not a moment was lost in setting out for London, where Geraldine was speedily united to one whose worth she had proved, and fully appreciated.

Meanwhile a far different and most painful scene was taking place in Oakland Manor. On the morning of the third day after Geraldine's marriage, as Reignald sat in the library, he was surprised by the entrance of Sir Anthony, pale, breathless, with an open letter in his hand; twice he attempted to speak, but the words refused to come, and Reignald took the letter from his father's trembling grasp. As his eyes ran over the contents, the color forsook his cheek, and he trembled so violently that he was obliged to sink into a chair.

The cause of this agitation was but a few terribly brief sentences, from an eminent London lawyer, stating that Miss Glenvylle had married Guy Carleton, and intended to commence an action against Sir Anthony Neville and son immediately. Thus the hope of winning back the broad lands of Neville Park was lost, and reputation and fortune both gone, their future existence must be wretched beyond description.

With a fearful expression, Reignald handed the note back to his father and left the room. A few minutes afterwards, a terrible shriek rang through the house, and hurrying in the direction of his son's chamber, whence the sound proceeded, Sir Anthony found the rash young man prostrate, with the dark blood welling out from his throat, and Lucilla bending over him in a state of stupefaction. The servants who were thronging in, raised Neville up, but life was extinct, and when Carleton and Geraldine came down on the reception of the dreadful news, they found Sir Anthony a hopeless paralytic, and Lucilla fled, none knew how nor whither.

Many years passed before Geraldine could even partially forget those weeks of misery, and their denouement; but at last happier scenes banished them far in the back ground, and the gipsey had reason to bless the day that she sent a warning note to Carleton.

Whenever we find a man who enjoys a wide popularity, we may be assured, however bad his reputation may be, that he has some good qualities in an eminent degree.—*Lord North.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE CONFESSION.

BY BLANCHE D'ANFOSSE.

The breeze blew soft through the open sash,
And fanned the marble brow
Of a poet, who listened the ceaseless plash
Of the cataract, thundering low.
Through the wide hall came the sound of mirth,
Of music, and dancing, and joy—
The breeze, fanning the glad ones of earth,
With fragrant flowers to toy;
But low on a sofa, in dreamy trance,
The poet unheeded the many dance.

The breeze has lifted the silken locks
That shade his thoughtful brow;
His soft blue eyes are lighted up
With a thrilling meaning now.
A dark-eyed maiden, wandering by,
Unheeding where he lay,
Sealed herself the moment nigh,
To watch the fading day.
And the poet whispered—"Maiden, come!
Sit thee by my side in this lonely room:

"A moment of rapture, devoted to love,
Ere we part in the world of woe;
The stars in the dreary heavens above,
Smile softly on us now;
Madly, maiden, I've loved thee since
The moment first we met;
For on my heart in burning prints
Did Love his signet set."
The maiden gazed down with her piercing eye;
Her lip never echoed the poet's sigh.

"I loved thee ere I dreamt that pressed
My fevered brow with pain;
I've met thee oft in vicious blast,
And here we meet again;
My spirit knew thee when on earth
My eye first gazed on thee:
O love is not of mortal birth—
In dreams I've worshipped thee;
When first glanced the bright diamond flash of thine eye,
I knew that my genius of love was by!

"Maiden, O maiden, I've loved thee long—
Thou'rt the dream of my boyhood's days,
I have sung of thee in the thrilling song—
In the tender, pensive lays.
And now that my eye hath gazed on thee,
And I've clasped my hand round thine,
O, canst thou whisper nought to me?
No word for such love as mine?"
Still the maiden gazed down, but the jetty curls
In the twilight shaded the trickling pearls.

The poet sunk back on the couch and hid
His dreamy eyes with his hands,
But by the casement in bold relief
The dark-eyed maiden stands.
Look, the moonlight is floating round,
Like a silver mantle over her—
Standing like one spectre-bound,
Gazing on her lover.
But she places her light hand on his brow—
Ah, what is the dream poet thinking of now?

"Thou'rt loved me long in dreams, didst vow?
Sir Poet, we're met before;
The thoughts that are throbbing beneath thy brow,
Have wandered the wide world o'er.
I've met thy spirit afloat on the breeze,
I've heard its low, liquid strain;
But meetings and partings such as these
Must never be ours again.
O life were too happy, dreamed ever with thee;
I fear me, e'en heaven forgotten would be!

The poet has caught the fair hand, impressed
Upon it a burning kiss—
This the first- and the last—his heaving breast
Is racked with woe and bliss.
"Tis true, then!" Lena ne'er can be
His bride—and they must part—
No'er to gaze in those tell-tale eyes,
That mirror each the heart.
One wild embrace—then far away!
Morn dawned on Lena's marriage day.

OUR OWN FAULTS NEVER VISIBLE.

Of all this common failing of our nature the heathen were very sensible, and represented by saying that every man carries a wallet, or two bags, with him, the one hanging before him, the other behind him—into that before he puts the faults of others, into that behind him that of his own—by which means he never sees his own failings, whilst he has those of others always before his eyes. But self-knowledge helps to turn this wallet, and place that which has our own faults before our eyes, and that which has those of others, behind our back.

A very necessary regulation, this, if we would behold our own faults in the same light in which others do; for we must not expect that others will be as blind to our foibles as we ourselves are; they will carry them before their eyes whether we do or not. And to imagine that the world takes no notice of them because we do not, is just as wise as to fancy that others do not see us, because our eyes are shut.—*Mason's Self-Knowledge.*

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

FAREWELL TO THEE, ERIN.

BY WINNY WOODBINE.

Farewell to thee, Erin, thou home of my childhood;
I've wandered afar 'neath the shade of thy wild-wood,
I have roamed through thy valleys, thy mountains roved o'er,
And now I am leaving thy dearly loved shore.

How oft by the streamlet I've wandered at even,
To gaze on the glory that shone from the heaven—
Till my heart, in its loving, deemed the stars ne'er could be
As bright elsewhere as in Erin, the gem of the sea.

The memories of home softly round me are stealing,
And moving the waters of love and deep feeling;
And I sigh for the cot, by the wide spreading wild wood,
And the maiden who shared all my griefs in my childhood.

But fate hath ordained that far away I must roam,
To fight in the behalf of my country and home;
To battle for freedom; our fair Ireland to save
From the grasp of the tyrant—or else find a grave.

Far, far o'er the ocean our vessel is flying, [ing;
While the wind through the white sails in sorrow is sigh-
And echoes back sadly to our passionate grieving,
A dirge for the homes and the land we are leaving.

Then fare thee well, Erin, I know not if e'er
I shall view thy fair plains and thy cottages dear;
Should I fall in the strife, then my last words shall be
The name of my Alline, and a farewell to thee.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

ONE OF A THOUSAND.

BY HORACE B. STANIFORD.

"I say, she's one of a thousand, my mother. Such wit, such loveliness, such vivacity."

"Ah, my son, I fear you have in this instance been led away by outside show. Did I not know Ellen Varney well, I would not say one word against your proposal; but I do know her well. She is not the girl to make you a good wife. And were she even an excellent girl—which she could not be under the circumstances I am about to state—you would do wrong in a measure to take her for a wife. You know Lucius Warren has waited upon her nearly two years; and she has always given him encouragement until she found you. You are no better than he, but he has no money, and you have. Your few thousand dollars have attracted her. It is no noble quality she has detected in you, take my word for it."

"You mistake her, mother. She does love me, well—and for myself, too; for she has told me so in language not to be mistaken. I tell you she is one of a thousand."

"But I know her, my son, and I cannot see you take an unworthy partner to your bosom without using all my efforts to save you. Ah, you do not yet know how much of your future welfare depends upon the wife you shall choose. Look upon the home you would have when your poor old mother is gone."

"Speak not so, my mother. I cannot bear to hear you."

"But, my son, I cannot always remain with you. You know that. You have been my only care for years. I have loved you well, and I know that you have loved me in return, so all my cares have been joys, and all my labors for you only so many sources of blessedness. But the time must come when you will have no mother; and then who shall take that mother's place? When you are worn and weary with the business of the day, who shall give you peace and comfort? Remember, my boy, what you will want for a home. It is not a beautiful face, nor is it wit and vivacity—though these are worthy qualities in a woman who is worthy of them. Think calmly of Ellen Varney, and see if you can find—I mean not to praise myself, but yet I will ask it—can you find the signs of your mother's home qualities in her?"

"But, mother, you are prejudiced. You do not like Ellen. You have seen some little thing which you did not like, and hence you fancy she is not the girl I think she is."

"I have seen some things in her which I did not like, Vulcain. I will tell you one, if you will listen."

"Tell me."

"Then, only last week I was at her mother's. While I was there, a poor blind man came to the door and asked for food. He was cold and hungry, and his limbs were weak and tremulous. The servant-girl had gone out, and there was no fire in the kitchen. The only fire in the house, was in their little, back sitting-room. Ellen at first objected to admitting the old man to the house, though she thought he might have some food out of doors. But her mother saw my look, and she admitted him. I proposed having him come into the sitting-room where he could warm himself, but Ellen came nigh going into paroxysms at the bare idea. She said she could not remain in the room with such a '*horrid creature!*' And so the poor, shivering old man was forced to sit down in the cold kitchen and eat. The door was left ajar at the suggestion of Ellen, who feared that the 'old wretch,' as she termed him, might steal something. In a few moments the old man's dog came into the sitting-room, and crawling up to where Ellen sat, he wagged his tail and whined imploringly. He either wanted food or drink. She started up and gave him a kick that sent him crying away to his master. The noble brute had led his poor blind owner over the earth when all other friends had forsaken him. And this was the treatment the noble animal received at Ellen Varney's hands. I was sick at heart when I came away; but I came not until I had bade the old man follow me. That was the man who remained here two nights, and in whose conversation we found so much pleasure and profit."

"But Ellen—a—has very sensitive feelings, I know. Her nerves are not strong," returned the son, somewhat perplexed.

"And is such the woman for the wife of one who wants love and care through all the dark hours of a lifetime? Suppose you were sometime to be struck blind!"

"O, mother, you wrong Ellen, now. Whom she loved she would protect and care for."

"I don't know, my son. I fear, were you to become maimed in body, now, she would leave you at once."

"There, now I know you are prejudiced, or you would not have spoken those words. I know you do not understand Ellen."

"I will say no more, Vulcain. I have only spoken for your good, for I fear you do not fully realize the vast importance of the choice you are to make for a wife. You know what HOME is; and remember that all of your future home on earth will depend upon the character of the wife. One word more, my son: Poor Julia Lawrence loves you truly and well. You should not have turned from her."

"But I never, never, gave Julia any hopes of being my wife. If she loves me, how can I help it? She is not the girl that Ellen is. I tell you, Ellen is one of a thousand. She loves me, and I love her."

"Very well, my child; I only hope that ere your fate is irrevocably fixed, you may know exactly how much Ellen Varney loves you."

After this the son went to attend to important business, and the mother was left alone.

Vulcain St. Egbert was twenty-two years of age, and was just upon the point of going into business. His father had come over from France, at the accession of Louis XVIII. He had loved Napoleon, and when the mighty hero was banished to Elba, the elder St. Egbert came to America, and here his only child was born. When the father died, he left his widow, in keeping for his son, ten thousand dollars, also leaving the same amount for her use and comfort. Vulcain was then only ten years of age, and since then, his mother had kept him at school at her own expense, being resolved that when he came of age he should have his patrimony untouched for such business as he might select to prosecute.

And now Vulcain was going into business. Under the careful superintendence of his mother, the ten thousand dollars had more than doubled, and he was now able to buy out one of the most extensive business places in the town. An old man had grown gray, and accumulated a fortune, in his store, and he now sold out to Vulcain St. Egbert. But none in the town, save the youth and his mother, and the old merchant and his attorney, knew the extent of Vulcain's wealth. Those who knew him, knew that he had considerable, but they knew not how much.

Not far from where Vulcain lived, resided a poor widow who had an only child—a Mrs. Lawrence, who supported herself by hard labor, though of late years her child had been of much assistance to her. Julia Lawrence was nineteen, and though not so fair and beautiful as some, yet she was a lovely and loving girl. She possessed a noble look—a soft, winning nobleness—and it required acquaintance to develop all her beauty. She had been a schoolmate and playmate of Vulcain, and she loved him for his noble qualities of heart and soul. And once Vulcain had loved her; but as he came nigh to his commencement of business, and it became known that he had considerable money, people began to court his favors. Among this class were Mrs. Varney and her daughter Ellen. The latter had a quick, flashing wit, the transitory brightness of which hid its shallowness. And she had some outward beauty, too. Her mother had commenced the onset—for it had been calmly planned that the young man should be caught and secured. She commenced the work by very adroitly leading Vulcain's mind astray. To this end she brought the whole force of her social powers to bear, and gradually she made him feel that by associating with poor people, he was losing his influence in society. This point was not presented bare and unrelieved, for had it been, Vulcain's soul would have scorned the idea; but the way was curiously paved for it, and it came upon him unawares. He was caught and ensnared, and Ellen's influence she thought complete. Vulcain knew not how Julia Lawrence wept all alone in her chamber, for he knew not how truly she had loved him. Ah, he knew not his own heart. It was in a state of fusion, caught and bound by elements not congenial with his nature, and living upon the ideal alone.

It was on the first of January when Vulcain concluded the bargain with Mr. Forbes, the man of whom he was to buy. He paid down seventeen thousand dollars in cash, and the store with all its contents was his. That evening he came home and held a long consultation with his mother, upon a simple subject that he had held in contemplation for some time; and in the end, she agreed with his opinion.

"And now," said the mother, after this matter was disposed of, "I suppose in the coming spring you mean to take a wife."

"I think of it," replied Vulcain."

"And are you still determined to make Ellen Varney your partner?"

"Of course."

"I wish you could know her better, my son."

"I know her well enough. I have made myself acquainted with her character, and I like it. And then her station in society is good."

"Ah, Vulcain, there is the rock upon which your bark may founder. Station in society is of much importance, I will admit, but stand up now, like a man as you are—stand up before me—look me in the eye—and then tell me if you want a wife to give you station in society? You want an honest, noble-hearted, pure-souled wife, and then, be she plebeian or patrician, her station will be with your own. You forget your own honor when you allow such a thought to enter your mind. You are what the world calls handsome—your features are noble, your hair is dark, glossy, and curling, and hence has Ellen——"

"Stop, my mother; you do not surely know Ellen Varney. I tell you she is one of a thousand."

"No, Vulcain, it is you who know her not. You have only seen her when she was prepared for your reception. I have been intimate in the family, and I know all her domestic qualities. O, my son, not for worlds would I thus speak of Ellen Varney, were it not that your whole future of earthly happiness is dependent upon your choice here. But we will say no more about it now. Seal not your vows with her until you have studied her character more carefully."

Vulcain was perplexed, but he knew that his mother meant only for his good, and he was not offended. On the next morning he started for the city, where he was going to purchase goods, and Mr. Forbes accompanied him, partly to settle up his own affairs, and, partly to introduce his youthful successor to the merchants of the metropolis. He was to be gone a week. On the fourth day of his absence, his mother received a letter from him, in which he stated that he had not quite money enough with him to do as he wished to do, and asking her to send him five hundred dollars. She did so, at once, and wrote a fond letter in reply.

That evening Mrs. St. Egbert called in upon Mrs. Varney. She found the mother and daughter both at home, and she was kindly welcomed.

"Have you heard from Vulcain, since he left?" asked Mrs. Varney, after various other topics had been touched upon.

"Yes, I received a letter from him to-day," replied Mrs. St. Egbert, in a low, sad tone.

"When *is* he going to buy Forbes out?" continued Mrs. Varney, not seeming to notice the tone of the answer she had just received.

"Well, they had some talk on the subject the day before my son went away. I think if Vulcain should look over his account, he would find himself—well, perhaps he will have to work diligently. A month ago he felt sure he had a number of thousand dollars, but from the tone of his letter, to-day, I am sure he finds himself with not so much money as he needed. However, he has found a good friend who can furnish him with a little. But I care not so much about that. I see by the same letter that he has lost one of his eyes!"

"Lost an eye!" gasped Ellen. "You don't mean so!"

"He has, Ellen—lost it entirely. But he has one good one left which he can use."

"O, mercy!" cried the affrighted girl, "how horribly he must look with only one eye. O, I never could bear the sight of a one-eyed man. That dreadful socket—all shrunk away and hollow! How did he lose it?"

"He didn't write me how. But then it will not hurt him for business."

"O, how dreadfully, *dread*fully, he must look!" murmured Ellen, spasmodically. "And he hasn't so much money as he thought he had!"

"No. He must have been spending money lately—he must have spent a great deal; I am sure of it. But I care not for that. He is young and healthy, and business is before him."

"But only one eye! But he can have a glass one put in."

"No, that would be impossible. The nature of the loss is such that art cannot do anything for it."

"How dreadful he *must* look!" repeated Ellen, shuddering.

"And do you suppose it hurt him any?" said Mrs. St. Egbert, severely.

"O, it must have hurt him. But what is that compared with the looks of the thing?"

"And what are simple *looks*, compared with the loss?"

After this the conversation was dull and unpleasant, and ere long Mrs. St. Egbert took her leave. Two days after that her son came home, and on that very evening a servant came from Mrs. Varney's with a note for Vulcain. The young man recognized Ellen's hand, and he opened the missive eagerly. It read as follows:

"TO VULCAIN ST. EGBERT. *Dear Sir*,—However painful it must be for me to pen these lines, still duty bids me do it. If there has been in your bosom any thoughts of a union between us other than that of common friendship, I hope you will banish it from this time. I sincerely pity you in your misfortune, but more than that I cannot do. I cannot unite myself for life to a man whose very face would make me shudder, every time I looked at it.

"Yours very respectfully, ELLEN VARNEY."

The young man read the missive through twice, and then he handed it to his mother.

"In mercy's name, what does she mean?" he uttered.

His mother read the note, and she smiled as she laid it down.

"What do you think of it, my son?"

"Think? Why—I know not what to think. You know something of it. Now what is it? Tell me."

"But first answer me, my son. What kind of love can the girl have felt for you who wrote this note? Answer me!"

"But I first must know what she thinks, and then I may answer."

"Well—she thinks you have lost one of your eyes, and that a glass one cannot be put in its place. And she also thinks that you have not so much money as you thought you had."

"But how should she have thought this?"

"Why, I must confess that I am at the bottom of it. I was in there on the evening after I received your letter, and upon their asking after you, I told them I saw by your letter that you had lost one of your eyes, and the only feeling Ellen expressed was horror at the thought of how you would look. They also asked me if, or when, you were going to buy Forbes out. I did not tell them that the thing was already done, but I told them I thought, if you were to look over your money, you would not find so much as you thought you had a month ago. I also told them you had to borrow some to get through in Boston; and also that I thought you had been spending much money very recently. All of which, you know, is strictly true. And if, in the result, I meant to deceive, the end must justify the means, for in no other earthly way could I have shown you Ellen's true character."

The youth bowed his head in silent thought, and for half an hour he spoke not a word. During that time a new spirit seemed to spring to life within him. His thoughts wandered away to the lowly widow's cot, and he knew that beneath that roof was one who loved him. The assurance was not such an assurance as he had had of Ellen's love—it was a calm, solemn truth which his soul embraced without a lingering doubt.

"We will speak of this in the morning," he at length said, and then he retired.

When he came down to breakfast his face was lighted up by a look of calm, self satisfied joy.

"My mother," he said, taking her hand, "forgive me for the doubts I have held of your judgment. Half of this long night have I laid awake and pondered upon the subject we have conversed so much upon of late. I can only say now that Ellen Varney is not what I could have wished. The woman who can fling away a loved object for so slight a cause is not surely the companion for a lifetime. She could not have loved me for what there was good or true in me. It cost me a pang last night—a torturing one—but it is past now. I must away to business early this morning, but we will converse further upon the subject this evening."

* * * * *

"My dear Mr. Forbes," said Mrs. Varney, meeting that gentleman in the street—Ellen was with her—"so it seems that young St. Egbert will not purchase your store, after all?"

"No—don't think he will, madam," replied the blunt old man.

"So I was informed. Poor youth! He must have spent a great deal of money lately."

"Yes—I think he must. He paid me seventeen thousand dollars in cash about a week ago."

"What? Paid you—seventeen thousand—A— But—"

"He bought my store, madam, over a week ago, and is now sole owner," said the old man, while Mrs. Varney was stammering.

"But I was told that he had to borrow money to—to—"

"Ah, yes. After having paid away twenty-three thousand dollars of his own, he wrote up to his mother for a few hundred, which she sent him, he being determined to buy for cash."

The scheming mother and daughter went home with a peculiarly annoying little insect in each ear.

Very soon the old sign came down from the great brick store, and a new one went up in its place, with the name—"VULCAIN ST. EGBERT."

* * * * *

"Mrs. St. Egbert, how *could* you tell me such a *falsehood*?" Mrs. Varney indignantly asked, as she met the former lady for the first time after the interview last alluded to between them. It was in front of St. Egbert's store they met, and Ellen was present.

"Surely," returned Mrs. St. Egbert, calmly, "I told you nothing untrue."

"Did you not inform us that your son had lost one of his eyes?"

"Yes—I believe I did," answered the lady, with a smile. "I told you I saw by my son's letter that he had lost an—*eye*. If you will look at his sign you will see what I meant. Don't you see—he spells his name now 'V-u-l c-a-n,' having left out the *i*. Before going into business he resolved to adopt the English method of spelling the Christian name. He conferred with me, and I advised him to do it. Don't you think it sounds better? or, at any rate, that it looks better?"

"But—but—you surely meant for us to understand differently, for you spoke of his having one *eye* left."

"Ah—yes—I remember. I said he had one left which he *could* use. I meant that if he clung to the *i*, he could have it for use by spelling out his whole name—*Saint* Egbert. Don't you see?"

The ingenious schemer was upon the point of giving vent to some very severe rebuke, but the approach of a third party prevented it—and they separated.

Not many days after this Vulcan St. Egbert visited at the Widow Lawrence's. Julia found it hard to compose herself, but she succeeded in doing it, and at length she conversed freely. The young man was astonished at the thought that now presented itself. Once he had preferred Ellen Varney to this noble, lovely being! But his eyes were open now, and so was his heart; and ere he left the widow's cot that night he held not a thought of love which Julia did not know. She wept, for she could not help it, but her tears were gentle dews, distilled of heaven, giving new life to the once blighted bud, and causing it to blossom as the full rose.

Years have passed since then, and many—many times, has Vulcan St. Egbert blessed the hour that led his steps back to the widow's cot; and now he can truly say, as he holds his wife to his bosom—"Thou art one of a thousand."

And Julia often answers—

"And the rest of the thousand can be easily found by those who can distinguish the false from the real. Noble women are plenty in our land."

A REMARKABLE CLIMATE.

The climate of the Khasia mountains, which lie northeast from Calcutta, and are separated by the valley of the Burrampooter River from the Himalaya range, is remarkable for the inordinate fall of rain—the greatest it is said, which has been recorded. Mr. Yale, an English gentleman, established the fact that in the single month of August, 1841, there fell 264 inches of rain, or twenty-two feet, of which *twelve and a half feet fell in the space of five consecutive days*. This astonishing fact is confirmed by two other English travellers, who measured thirty inches of rain in twenty-four hours, and during seven months above five hundred inches. This terrific rain fall is attributed to the abruptness of the mountains which face the Bay of Bengal, and the intervening flat swamps two hundred miles in extent. The district of the excessive rain is extremely limited, and but a few degrees further west rain is said to be almost unknown, and the winter falls of snow so seldom exceed two inches. —*Boston Atlas.*

AN AMUSING MISTAKE.

A gentleman of Dount was going out in his carriage to make some calls with his wife, when he discovered that he had left his visiting cards. he ordered his footman, recently come into his service, to go to the mantelpiece in his sitting-room, and bring the cards he should see there. The servant did as he was ordered, retained the articles to be used as he was directed, and off started the gentleman, sending in the footman with cards wherever the "not at home" occurred. As these were very numerous, he turned to his servant with the question—"How many cards have you left?" "Well, sir," says the footman, very innocently, "there's the king of spades, the six of hearts and the ace of clubs!" "The deuce!" exclaimed his master. "That's gone," said John.—*New York Mirror.*

Jester's Picnic.

A Yankee, boasting of his inveterate hatred of everything British, is living in a neighboring city, with a colonist family. He takes every opportunity to have a slap at Brother Bull, and the colonist does what he can to defend the venerable gentleman.

"You are arguing," said the colonist, "against your ancestors."

"No, I'm not."

"Who was your father?"

"A Yankee."

"Who were your forefathers?"

"Yankees."

"Who were Adam and Eve?"

"Yankees, by thunder!"

"Napoleon Alexis Dobbs, come up here and say your lesson. What makes boys grow?"

"It is the rain, sir."

"Why do not men grow?"

"Because they carry an umbrella, which keeps off the rain."

"What makes a young man and woman fall in love?"

"Because one of 'em has a heart of steel, and t'other has a heart of flint; and when they come together, they strike fire, and that is love."

"That's right. Now you may go and plague the gals." So *says Simon.*

Up at Manchester, the other day, a party from Boston was examining the factory facilities and buildings, and among the rest, the force pumps that throw water all over the premises. This was just as the girls were leaving their work, and some of them got pretty wet.

"You are washing your girls, colonel," said one of the party to the master of the ceremonies.

"Yes," said he, quickly, as the bell sounded for closing the work for the day, "yes, and we are now ringing them out."

Having colloquy.—"Peter—Peter, I see a toad," said a little darkey to his brother, one day as they were digging over a heap of manure.

"Where am he, Joe?"

"Why, right dar, don't ye see 'im, strike 'im wid de hoe."

Joe hit the toad a crack, which brought Peter to the ground.

"O, you fool, Joe! dat was my toe. I see'd *dat* all de time."

A countryman, in one of the Western States, with a load of meal, drove up to a lady's door, when the following conversation took place:

"Do you want any meal, ma'am?"

"What do you ask for a bushel?"

"Ten cents, ma'am—prime!"

"O, I can get it for a fip!"

(In a despairing voice.) "*Dear lady!* will you take a bushel for *nothing?*"

"Is it sifted?"

A teacher had been explaining to his class the points of the compass, and all were drawn up in front towards the north.

"Now, what is before you, John?"

"The north, sir."

"And what is behind you, Tommy?"

"My coat tail, sir," said he, trying at the same time to get a glimpse.

"Russell, what in the world put matrimony into your head?"

"Well, the fact is, Joe, I was getting short of shirts!"

Just as well to confess it. How many are in the same fix? Four-fifths! And yet we rave about "love!" Bah! why not tell the truth at once, and say, "*convenience?*"

We cut the following advertisement from a paper published in the far West: "To rent, a house on Melville Avenue, immediately alongside of a fine plum garden, from which an abundant supply of the most delicious fruit may be stolen during the season. Rent low, and the greater part taken in plums."

"I wish you would not smoke cigars," said a plump, little black-eyed girl to her lover.

"Why may I not as well smoke as your chimney?"

"Because chimneys do not smoke when they are in good order," was the young lady's reply.

The young gentleman smoked.

Lord Dudley Stuart, Kossuth's deceased friend, when a Vienna lady remarked impudently to him, "What wretched bad English you all speak in London!" replied, "It is true, madam, for we have not enjoyed the advantage of having the French army twice in our capital."

Some paper says that we should only elect "tried men" to office; to which the Albany Knickerbocker replies—"That is being done in this county. One of the candidates for the Assembly has been 'tried' four times—three times for swindling, and once for bigamy."

How far would the line extend if all the folks of the city were sleeping heads to heels? and how loud would the sound be if they were all to snore simultaneously? We paws for a reply.

How can a man ride from one place to another in the shade, when at intervals the sun shines full upon him? At such intervals he has only to dismount and walk.

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